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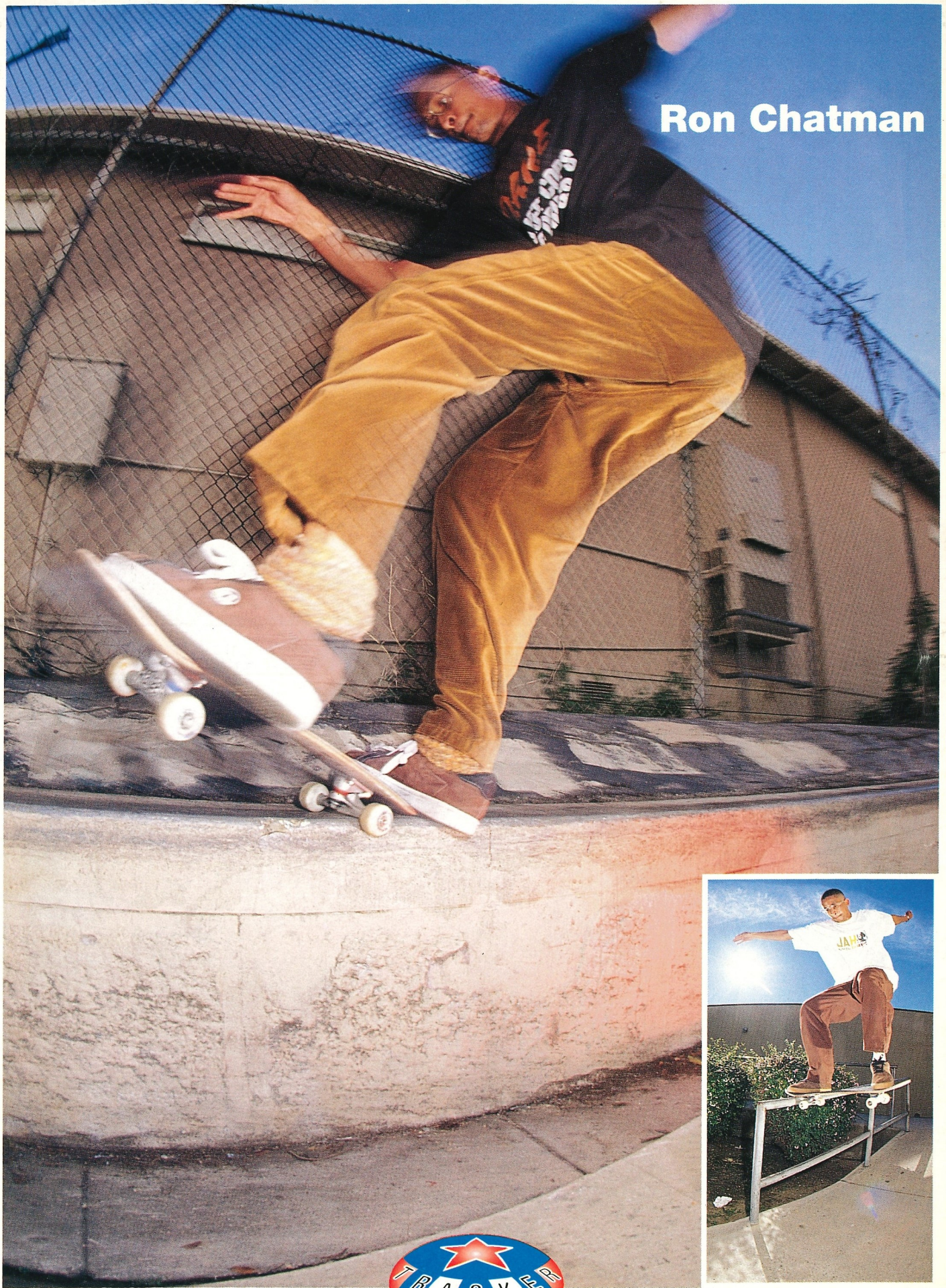

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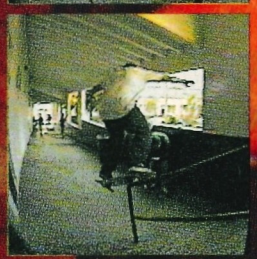

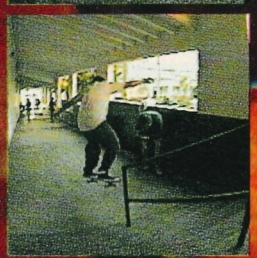

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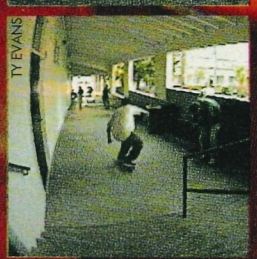

Cover: Jeff Taylor feeble grinds a sweety pie handrail. Photo: Swift. Art: Nathan Peters. See sequence right for the clean dismount. Above: It's not where you're from or where you're at, it's who you are and what you do, Eben Janke frontside boardslides a D.C. rail.

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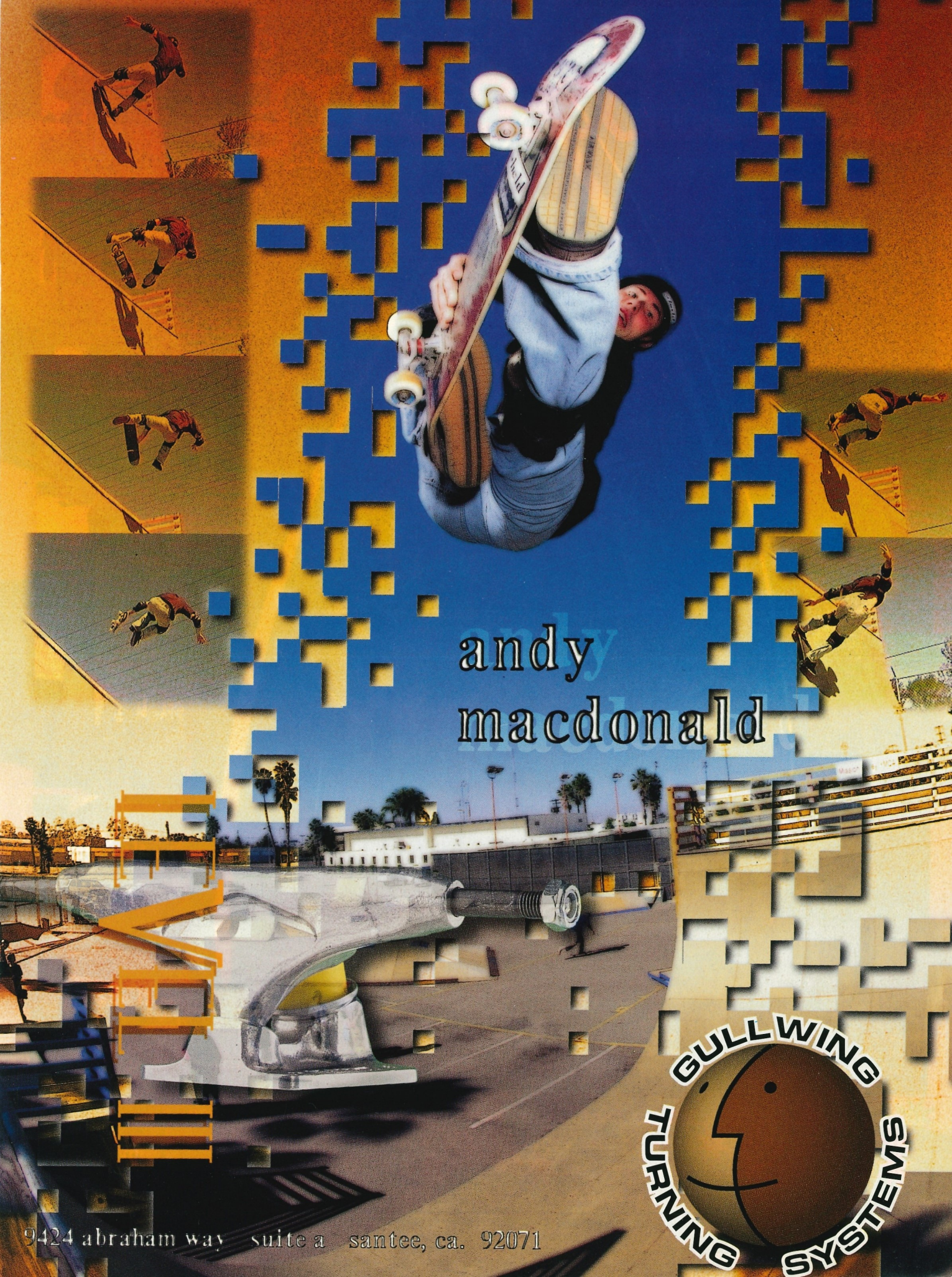
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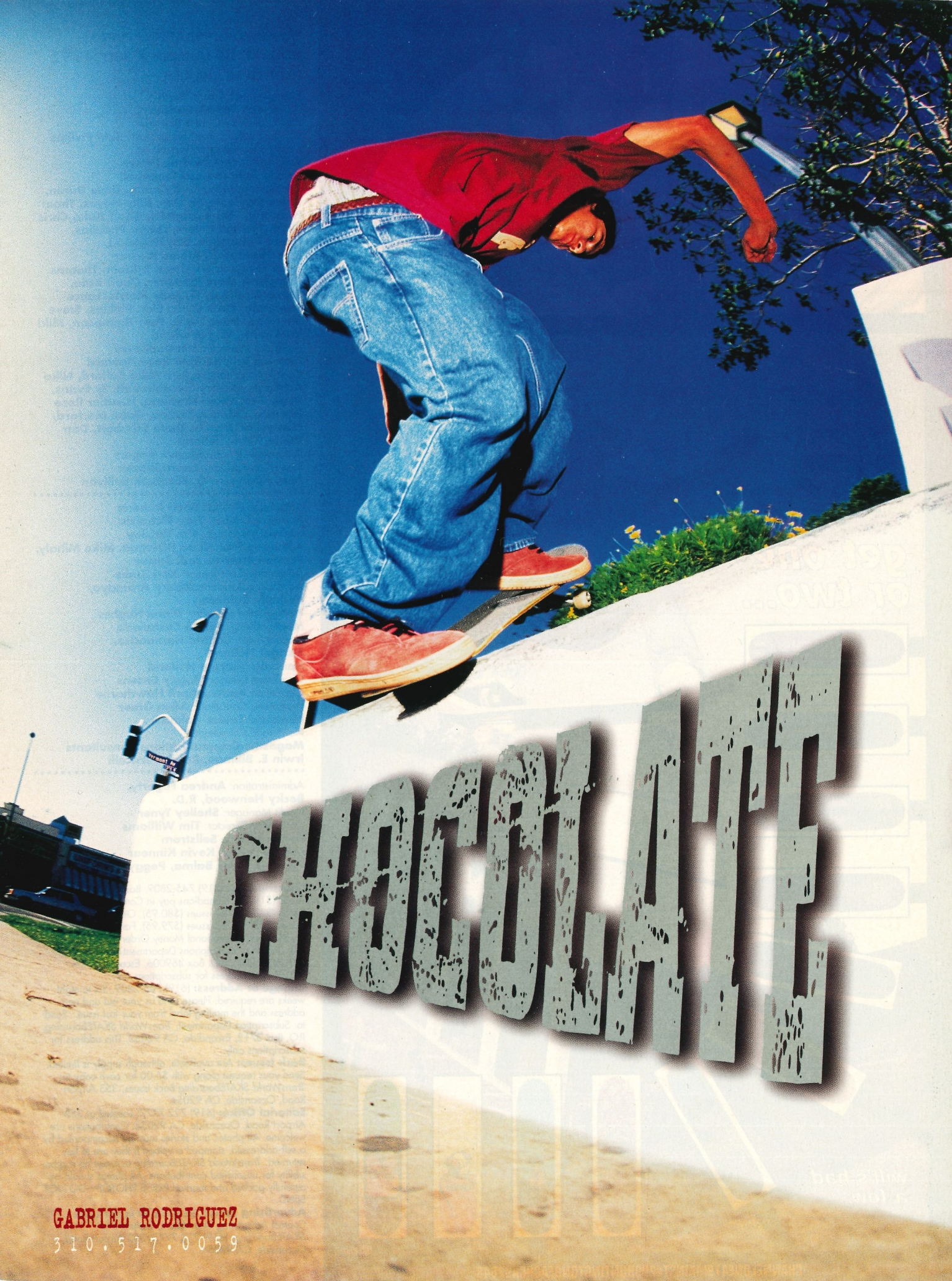

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TRANSWORLD SKATEBOARDING
VOLUME 13 NUMBER 7 JULY 1995
PRINTED IN THE USA

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Subscriptions: (619) 745-2809. Basic rates are: 12 issues ($19.95), Canadians pay in Canadian dollars 12 issues ($43.95), 24 issues ($80.95). Other foreign 12 issues ($42.95), 24 issues ($79.95), Foreign orders must be paid with International Money Order in U.S. funds only. Send to: Subscriptions Department *TransWorld SKATEboarding*, P.O. Box 469006, Escondido, CA 92046. This address for subscriptions only.
Change of Address: (619) 745-2809. Six to eight weeks are required. Please send us your old and new address and the mailing label from your last issue. Send to: Subscription Department, *TransWorld SKATEboarding*, P.O. Box 3712, Escondido, CA 92033. This address for subscriptions only.
Back Issues: Are available, although supply is limited. Send your request along with $5.00 for each copy to: *TransWorld SKATEboarding* Back Issues, 353 Airport Road, Oceanside, CA 92054.
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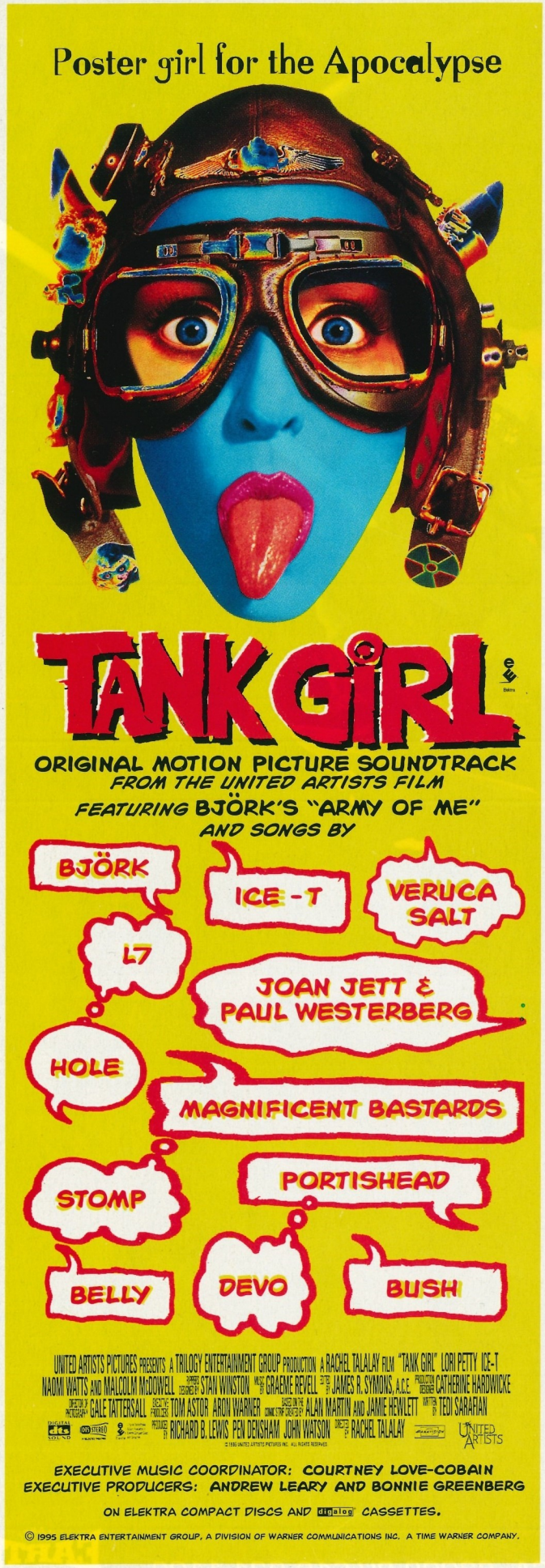

Sitting on Black-Sand Beaches

The movie ended, the big red curtain lowered from the ceiling, and we all filed out. Through the lobby, by the water fountain, past the popcorn popper, and the crowd waiting to see the next show, into a rainy Sunday afternoon we marched. It had been a strange weekend—a thoughtful one, as rainy weekends often are. Thoughts about life and how mysterious it can be ran through our heads as we got in the car. We drove slowly, cautiously home, as if protecting a lucky streak.

The reason for our thoughtfulness was the funeral of a friend—which we had attended on Saturday—a beautiful, young girl who had taken her own life. She had been living in pain—physical and mental—and must have decided that there was only one way out.

She always seemed so alive and happy. Whenever we got a card from her, it had those little confetti hearts inside ... you know, the kind that spill out all over the carpet and end up staying there for a year.

The car ride was about an hour and a half; the road wound through the lush, green landscape of San Diego County to the town of Poway. We arrived at the mortuary around two o'clock; the rain had taken a recess, but the gray clouds continued to pass swiftly overhead.

Inside the mortuary was a small chapel; rows of pews led to a small altar—we disregarded the brochures next to the Bibles. People, friends, cousins, brothers, moved about the room quietly hugging one another; they looked at a collage of photographs that chronicled the life of someone way too young to die ... and, just then a thought occurred to us. *The nucleus of this atom of friends is now gone.*

No good-byes were said, no disputes were settled, no answers were given ... just gone. Like a tear in an ocean she vanished into the vastness of everything we don't know. But, even though suicide is a selfish act, no blame was cast, for this was a time of remembering birthday parties, and Christmas mornings, and first words, and high school graduations.

So, we mingled and talked with others about her, and we smiled and laughed laughs of remembrance. Then we saw him.

He sat in a folding metal chair; bent forward at the waist, he appeared to be crying. Several people stood around him; hands on the back of his steel-gray suit, they quietly whispered in his ear attempting to console him, but his grief was deeper than a pat on the back, or the whisper of a friend. It was the heartache of a man who'd lost his little girl.

She was gone. He hadn't the chance to say, "Good-bye, I'll miss you." Happiness and pain must have been running, hand in hand, through his memory. Thoughts of seeing her for the first time, and holding her little hand in his. Recalling walking her to her first class; reassuring her that everything would be okay. Reading to her from her favorite book of bedtime stories again and again. Dreaming dreams of her future. Knowing that he was her security net, to catch her whenever she fell. As he sat in that room, confused by the cruel hand fate had dealt him, he must have been thinking, "Why?"

But no one answered. No one could.

Sure we'd felt the shock of having a friend take her own life, and the sorrow for those who loved her, but at that moment we began to feel his grief. The loss of the sun in the universe of all these people is nothing short of devastating.

We left after the ceremony, and on the way home we talked.

We talked about the funeral itself, and how it had done its job of getting these people together one more time—for funerals are for the living, not the dead. We then talked about the importance of life. Moreover, the importance of enjoying life. The smell of summer nights. The value of a slow kiss. The significance of celebrating, with friends and family, the important events in your life. The pure pleasure of going surfing with your brother, or traveling the world, or eating good food, or whatever it is you enjoy.

Trivial? Maybe, but we decided that it's these small pleasures that keep hope alive; they keep us dreaming, working, and striving for a day when we can go to Hawaii, lay on a black-sand beach in the tropical sunshine, and be at peace, while still on Earth.

Good-bye, Ann. We'll miss you.

– Joel Patterson

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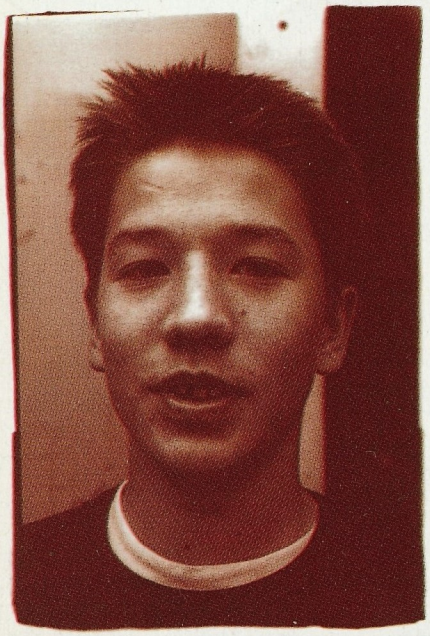

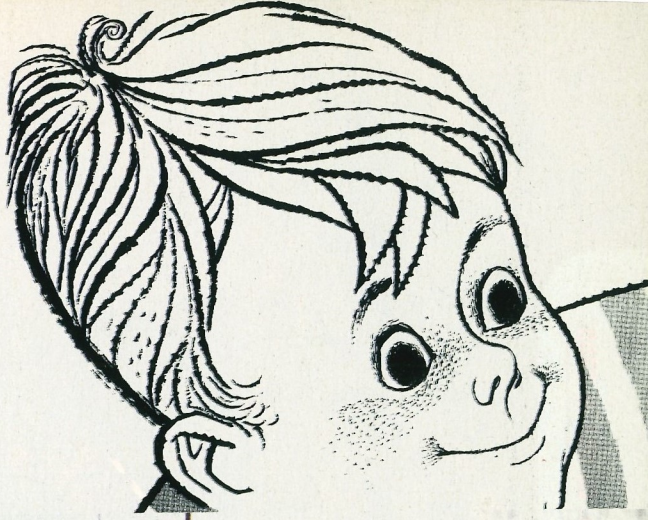

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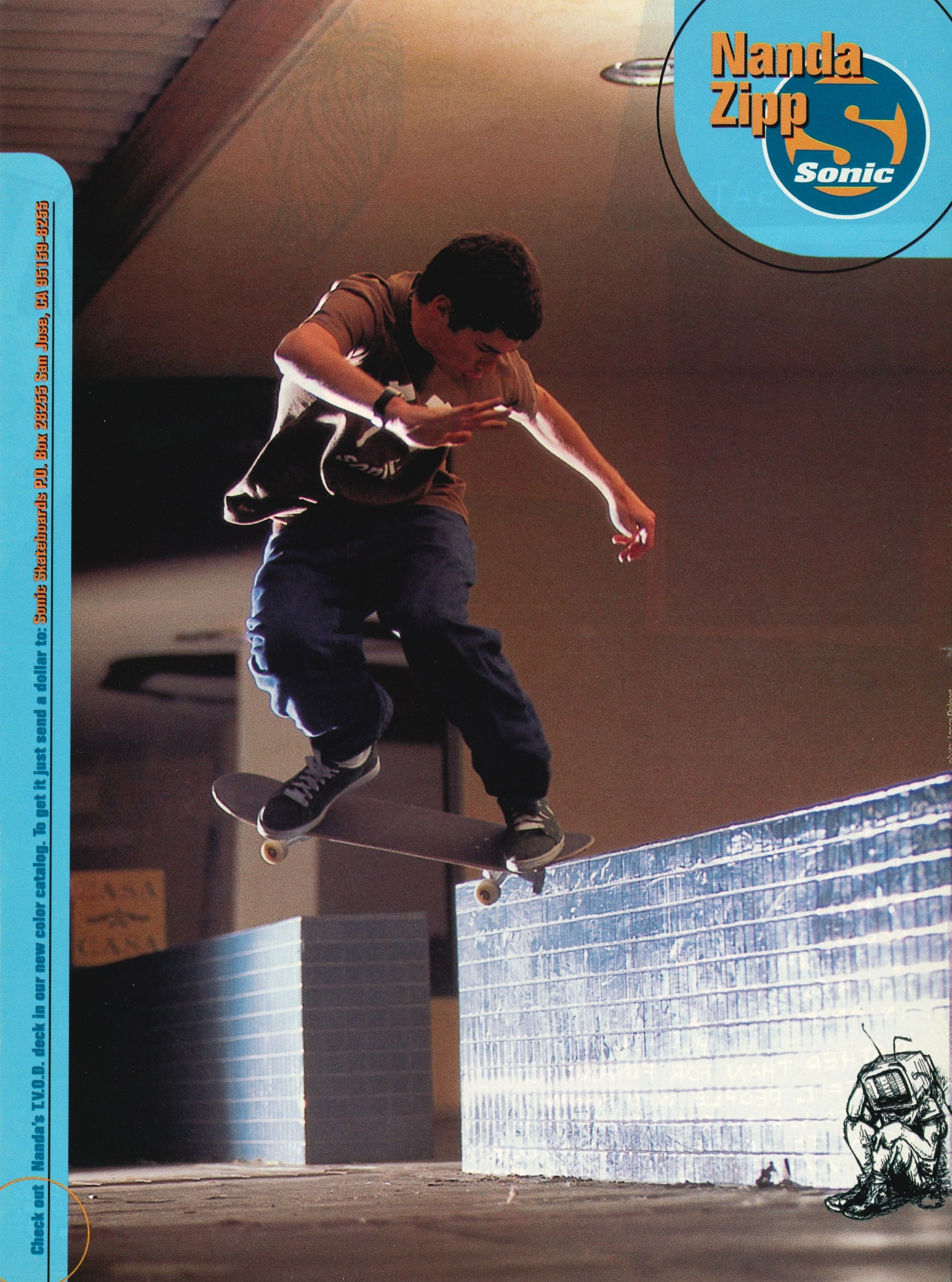
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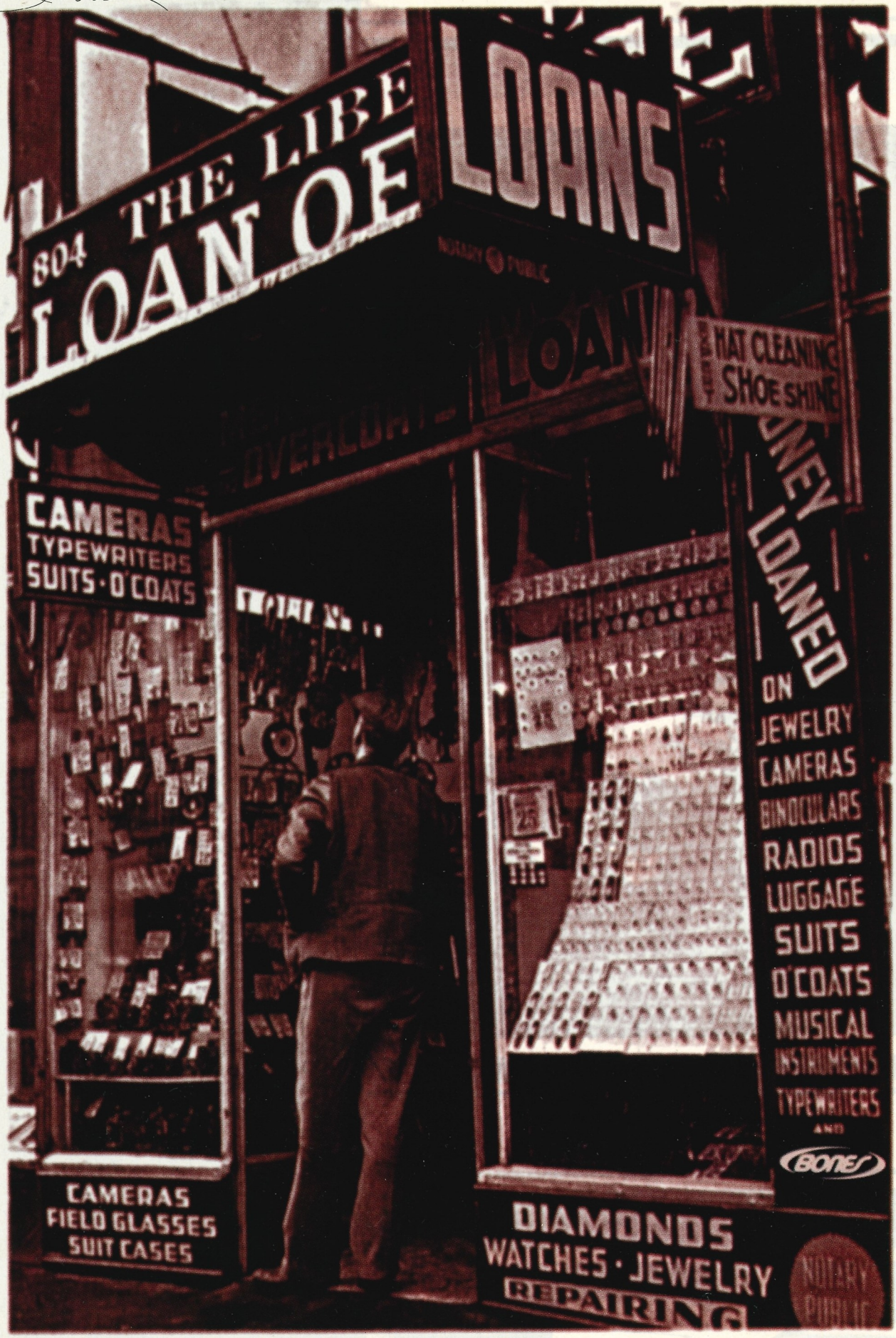
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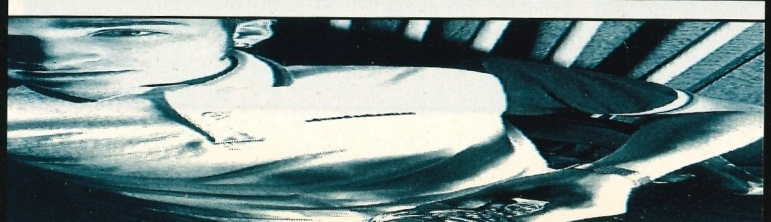

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litterbox

CREATIVITY

"You do something, and then somebody else comes along and does it pretty."—Pablo Picasso

My tenth-grade art teacher stood in front of my class on the first day of school and made a profound statement. He said, "Creativity's like shit, everyone's got it in them, some just have more than others." I didn't really listen to him then, and even though his credibility was slightly diminished after he ran around the room shooting make-believe Vietcong infantrymen with a broom handle during an episode of post-traumatic stress disorder, I later found out that he was right. Everyone does have creativity inside them.

Sure J.D. Salinger was creative, as was Henri Matisse, William Shakespeare, and all the others we studied in high school, but many of the truly creative ones aren't thought of as such. You may be one, so let's hear from you. Comment, question, we don't even care, just sit down, grab a pen, and, as my art teacher would have said, "Let's see just how full of shit you are." Litterbox,* TransWorld SKATEboarding, *353 Airport Road, Oceanside, CA 92054. Or fax us at (619) 722-0653. And now we're in the age of telecommunications; our e-mail address is transkate @aol.com

WORTH IT I'm eighteen years old, I've been involved in skateboarding since I was ten. While growing up I saw the world change in many ways; people my age grew up in a fairly innocent time. Something happened along the way, though, and we all try to make sense of it. We, the ones who remember life before home computers, single-parent families, and zombie-like media stores.

Society looks down on us; it says we'll never achieve as much as our parents, and that is probably true. The more I think about it the less I care. Obviously some of our parents were so wrapped up in success that they forgot what was really important. Whatever we do achieve, it will be real.

When I started skating, I quickly realized that society doesn't care about the individual. How can it? How can something created to control millions of people care about you? The point being that no matter what you do, skating or otherwise, society will try to impose a negative effect on you.

The society that raised us (though not perfect) has been deteriorating for some time. People are not putting into society what they got out of it as kids, and this is killing us. Our schools are failing, our legal system is failing, and our government is failing. There is not much left in the 90s that will teach kids how to become good people.

While our peers were at the mall, we were testing our limits, learning one more trick, feeling our bodies carry out what was in our minds.

Even if you're not aware of it, skating will teach you creativity, determination, and pride. Always take pride in what you do. If it's worth doing, it's worth doing well.

Growing up skating was the only thing I was ever addicted to. If you ever miss skating, it's because there is nothing else in your life that will give you as much satisfaction. As everyone realizes, no one can skate forever. We will all have to find things that can try to take its place. The lucky ones will get paid for it. Do me a favor: Rise above society. Turn things around. I'd like to thank Ed Templeton, Steve Berra, *TransWorld*, and everyone else who has given a little bit back. **Ryan Loomis, UWEC, Eau Claire, WI**

MORE POWER TO YOU I'm just writing you in regards to Grant Brittain; last week I called to get an answer on photography, and he helped me lots. Thanks, Grant, you are a swell guy for not being a cool guy and snowing me with outrageous tech talk. Thanks. **Mike Krezanowski, Ontario, Canada**

Mike, don't let this scare you, but Grant's the Red Power Ranger.—J.P.

DRAIN BAMAGE I subscribe to your magazine, and I think it's cool, but I have a problem. I love to skate, and it's rad, but I have to wear a helmet. That really sucks bad. My parents make me wear it. If they catch me without it, they take my board. I'm only thirteen, so I

can't do a thing about it. I hate helmets because they're hot and bulky and you look like a fool, especially street skating, I don't know what to do. Help. **Ben Brown, Woodland, WA**

I don't know if this is going to be of any consolation, but here goes anyway. I've been in the States for over a year now, and have been in contact with skating almost every day—in that time I've only seen someone bonk their melon once. If you were in a ballet class, would you be forced by your parents to wear a helmet? What if gymnastics was your thing, would your parents make you wear that sucker during the floor exercise? I think Nancy Kerrigan would have looked pretty stupid on the ice in a Protec—maybe some pink feathers around it would help. I can understand your parents' concern; skateboarding is a dangerous sport, but so is driving in a car and you wouldn't have a helmet on doing that, or would you?—D.P.

DEAR SKIN I'm living in Southsea now and doing a biology degree in Portsmouth University (in the UK). The skatepark is still open and there are plenty of good skateboarders. I don't know what's happening with *RAD* these days, I haven't spoken to Andy for ages. Skating is really a way of life down here and the people are cool. I've been going clubbing with Gary Lee and saw Barry Abrook playing bass in his band. What did you think of *Pulp Fiction*? They still haven't released *Natural Born Killers* over here. I want to see that Luc Bresson film, *Leon*. How come you're always in the background of Swift's photos? The sequence of Paul Sharpe nollie 180ing that bin was sick!—**Chris Pullman, Southsea, England, UK**

GETTING WISER I just want to let you guys know I appreciate your wisdom floating to me every month. It seems you're my only link with the outside skate world. I live in a very small town (200 population) and I don't make it out that often anymore (unemployed with a baby on the way). When I can, I head to Portland to skate Burnside (it rips). I could go on and on about how much this scene sucks, but you know it could be a lot worse. I'm just grateful to be alive so I can see my son born and pass the adrenaline rush on to him (if he wants it). Basically what I'm trying to say is that it's not as bad as I used to think—I just look at it differently now (it's about fun, not hype and stereotypes). Keep up the positive mag; it helps me breathe better each month. **Justin Matta, P.O. Box 1022, Stevenson, WA**

RIGHT BACK WHERE I STARTED To begin with, my name is Ricki Bedenbaugh, and the reason I'm sending this letter is to thank everyone on the West Coast who helped me out while I was living there. In 1991 I had to chose to either live in Memphis, Tennessee (one of the worst cities to live in America), or live in Pensacola, Florida (one of the smallest cities in America). Well, not even one week before I had to make a decision, I get this phone call from Kris Markovich (he had been living in Carlsbad for about a year). I explained my situation, and he asked me to come and live with him at his parents' home. I couldn't believe it! This is what I had been waiting for: a chance to move to California and skate with all the guys I saw in your magazine.

So I packed everything that I owned into a 1978 Dodge Aspen (Ted Newsome has been in the ol' has-been Aspen). I had faith in my bucket and knew that it would make it to California. I drove for twelve hours a day for three days by myself—man, I didn't care, I just wanted to get to Cali and start skating. After 72 hours of driving and sleeping in some of the cheapest motels in America, I finally made it to Carlsbad. I had to call up Kris because I had no idea where I was, the first thing he tells me is, "Don't worry about anything, I'm going to hook you up." So I followed Kris to his parents' house, and it was like I was family to them. It's impossible to put onto paper how I felt when they brought me into their home.

The whole nine months I was there it was

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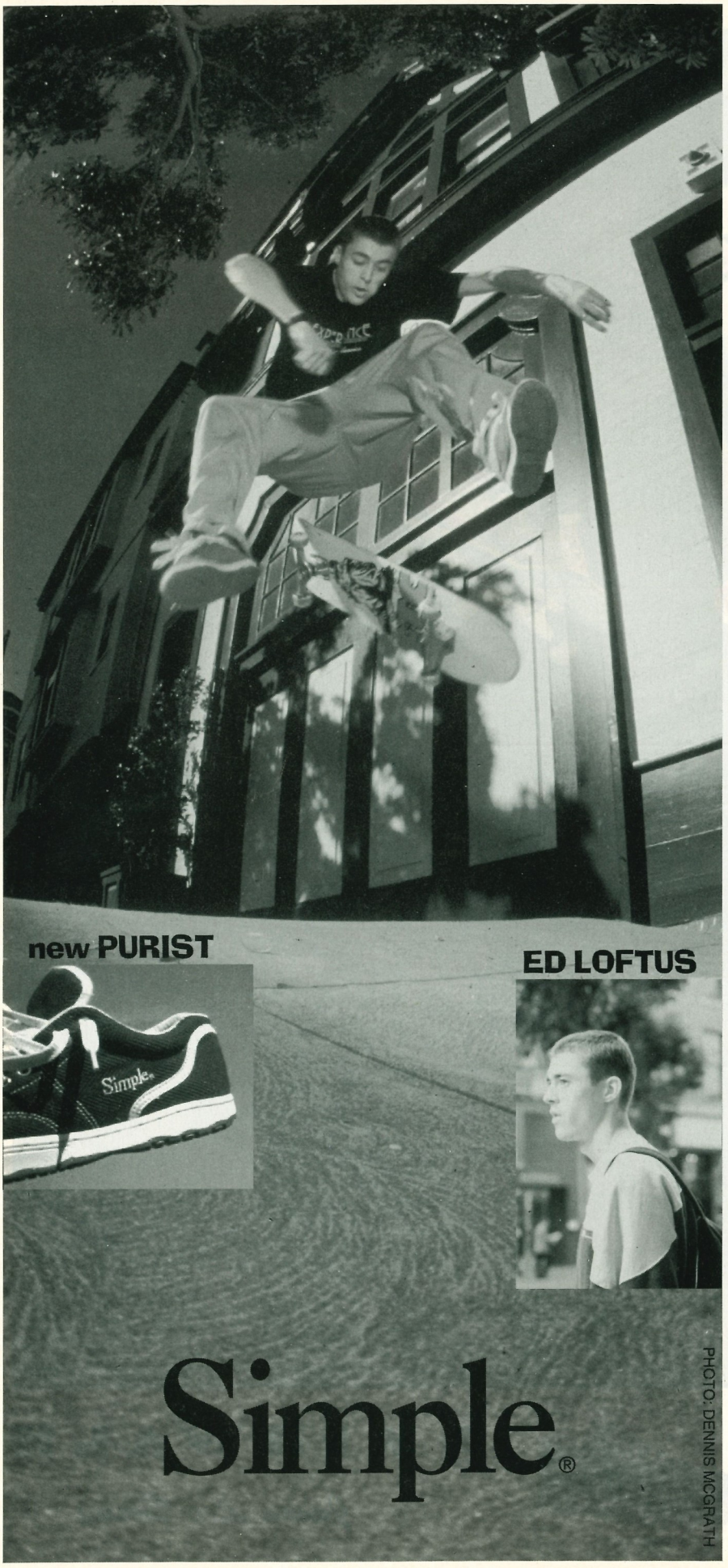
like a dream come true. Kris introduced me to everyone I had ever wanted to meet, I was getting to skate with all these people every day. At first it was kind of intimidating, but then I realized that they weren't different from me, they just got paid to skate. Speaking of money, I was running out of it, I had to find a job. After about two weeks of looking, I got this lame-ass job, bagging rich people's groceries at Ralph's in Del Mar—making $4.75 an hour. Needless to say, that job didn't last long because Natas offered me a job filming for the 101 videos. I couldn't believe it, I had a job filming for a video! Now that was the shit.

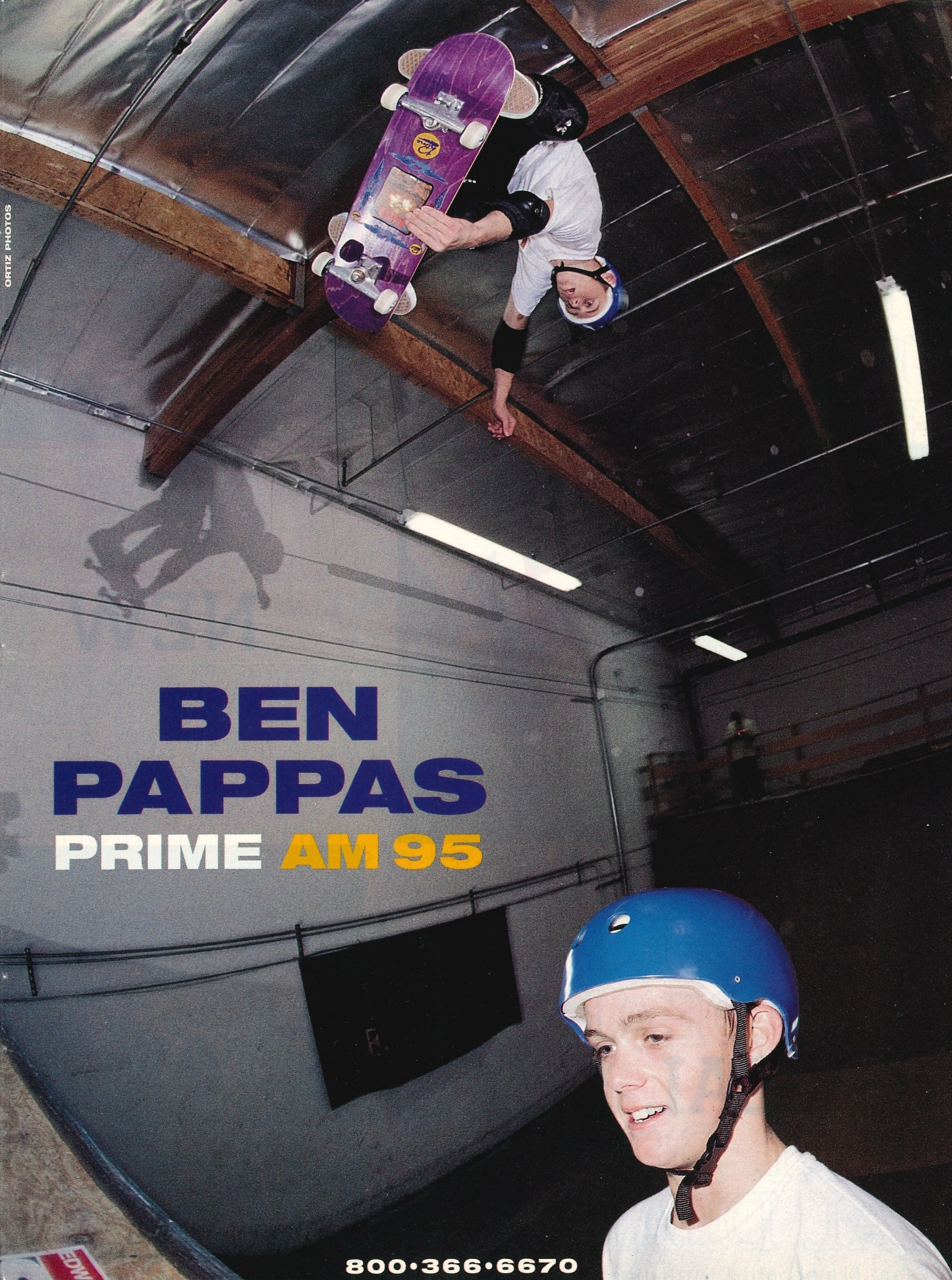
Although I was getting paid to do something that I had always dreamed of doing, I knew I couldn't make a living off it. If it wasn't for Kris and his his family, Natas, and Rob Dotson, there is no way I would have made it. Thanks for everything you guys did for me. I just have been thinking about all the friends that I made while I was living there, and even though we don't stay in contact, I'll never forget the friends and the time I had in California. I've been meaning to write this letter for the last two years, but I'm really bad about procrastinating. Anyway, if you could let Ted read this letter, and if anyone remembers me, I would really like to hear from you. Sincerely, **Ricki Bedenbaugh, 3101 E. Cervantes St. Pensacola, Fl 32503**

Ted read this letter and tried to call you, all he got was the answering machine. He was wondering what you were up to. But most of all he was curious to know why you left, especially when it sounded like you were having such a good time.—D.P.

DOWN, SET, UM ... UHH ... OH, YEAH, HIKE Hi, I'm a six-foot-four, 230-pound football player. I really like football, it's fun. I think all you skateboarding guys are dumb. All you guys just sit around in your big pants and long hair and ride on these tiny little boards—how stupid. I bet all you guys are on drugs. Y'all should all just quit your little game and do something productive, like play football. I bet if you guys stopped skateboarding, cut your hair, quit drugs, and got some Pepe slim-fit jeans y'all might amount to something. Love, **Kris "Bubba" Graham, Houston, TX**

Yes, sir.—Joel

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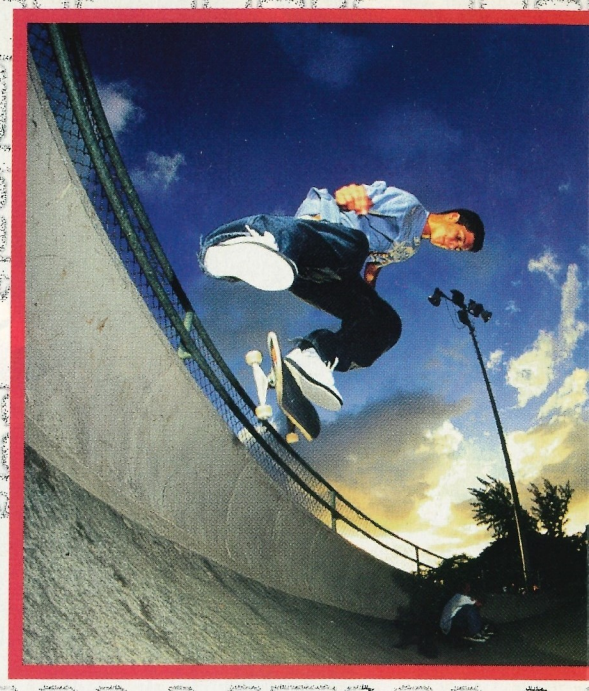

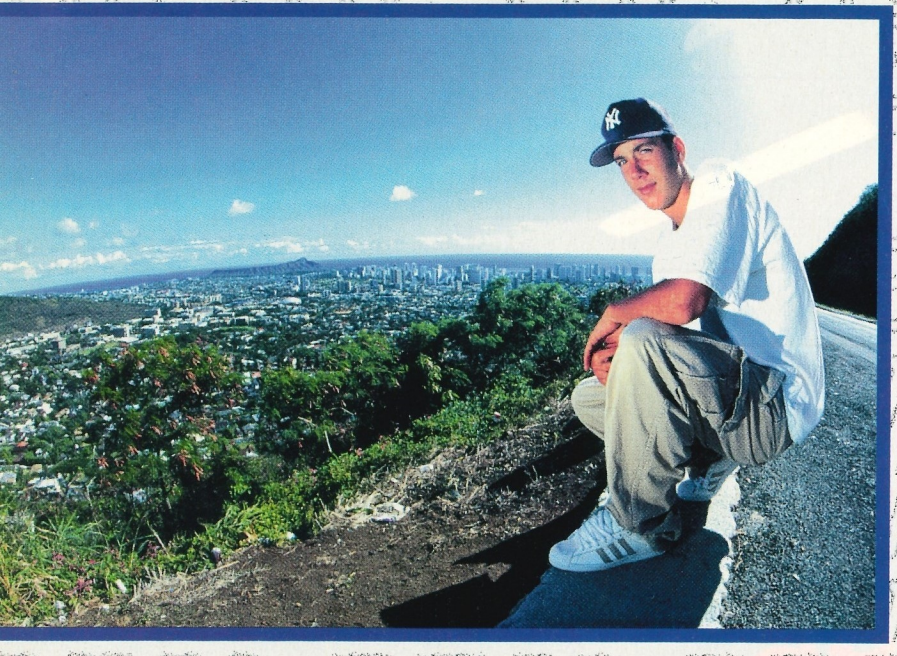

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jaM sandwicH

An interlude with Sebadoh on their hell tour

One week before Sebadoh was to play in San Diego, California ,TWS's trusty Art Director Ted Newsome managed to pull some strings through the vast string-pulling system within Transworld Publications to arrange an interlude with the band Sebadoh.

The night came when Sebadoh was scheduled to bless Southern California with the grace of soulfull music, and Ted and I were there on time. Sebadoh, performing without a soundcheck, appeared a bit tired, and we later found that the word "sleep" was hiding in an invisible hotel that none of the band members could seem to find. Even though the multi-talented Jason Lowenstein broke a bass string every other song, and a fat lame-o stagehand geek yelled, "You suck," while the band was experiencing uncontrollable technical difficulty, they managed to pull their resources together and complete the show without losing their sanity.

Whilst Ted was slapping his intrigingly large fingers across his fancy camera for some live-action photos, I was humming to the "Not Too Ashamed" arrangement that seemed to hold up the world with its strong rhythmic bass pluckings. After the show Ted and I approached Lowenstein to let him know we were from *TWS*, he said, "I used to buy that magazine back when I was tryin' to get my shit together on a skateboard!" Jason later asked us about Powell Peralta: "So was Powell just the money guy in that company?" Who'll ever know the answer to that question? I know I won't.

NEWSOME

Anyway, the band has been on tour since Febuary 1st and will continue until March 17th. Even though this tour doesn't last a millenium, Lou Barlow expressed the inconveniences of drivng everywhere with the tour as, "Every day I'm expecting to die. It's kinda tense," he elaborated further, "keeping the equipment in order, remembering lyrics and to change my strings is kinda tough because I have my mind occupied with other lyrics and music."

Barlow defintely has been "occupied" lately as far as recording goes. He and friend John Davis just collaborated on an album titled *The Folk Implosion*, the opposite of the John Spencer Blues Explosion. "Gender politics you can dance to," Barlow's fiancée Kathleen describes. Since the 80s Lou Barlow has been documenting his creative side at home on four tracks; as a result he created his own unique world of music he calls "Sentridoh" (pronounced sen-try-doh), which is released kinda low-key for those in constant search of more exposure to his music. Lou comments on his approach to recording music using the raw basics: "I think that most modern music it makes people feel like they can't do anything, because it tries to overpower them." Listening to his humble distribution of feelings through music, it seems the only "overpowering" involved is his ability to liberate exciting melody with inspiring lyrics (also harnessed in Jason Lowenstein's ability), which completes the foundation of Sebadoh. After a few words, the sleepy Sebadoh crew piled into their vans only to play another show in another town somewhere, and Ted and I were ready to go back and catch a few Zs ourselves. **—N. Peters**

The Nonce
World Ultimate
American Records

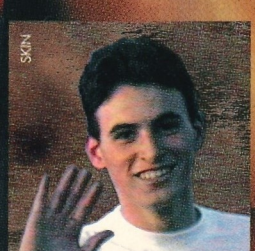
In the era of G-funk, where "real" brothas play street dramatics for all the blood they can, The Nonce seems to feel most hip-hop has lost its sense of fun and games. While they also utilize evocative, moody funk, they rap about the little details that made hip-hop the soundtrack for their childhood: rocking rap contests at World on Wheels, selling homemade mix tapes on street corners, trying to pick up cuties at the bus stop. The result is an album that kicks in memories, not enemies' doors; that rocks crowds, not slow-rolls with barrels loaded.

From the Los Angeles underground that produced the Freestyle Fellowship and Volume 10, The Nonce's Nouka Base and Yusef Afloat are more musically minded, dressing their classic treble-and-bass vocal combo in warm textures. And boy do they know how to tell a good tale. On "Mixtapes" they recall the little thrills hip-hop gave: "On the bus rolling to crib, I would get dibs on the seat with my man O.J. and rock beats from Leimert Park to 81st," Nouka recalls. The next scene finds them selling mix tapes to the entire neighborhood. The two grow to gain enough confidence to pick up the microphone in front of a crowd. "Money really wasn't part of the rap," rhymes Yusef. "Paid was having people starting to clap." They aren't concerned with how hard they are, just with sharing some of their good feelings for great music.

The album is full of hummable hooks, sweet melodic loops and dope rhymes. Check "J To The I, "Good To Go," and "The Bus Stops" in particular for funny stories of teen lust. The faintly dancehall rumble of "World Ultimate" and the wildly exuberant "Keep It On Yawl" are tasty pieces of pure B-boy braggadocio. Thank God for the little things, and thank hip-hop for The Nonce.—**Jeff Chang**

Laughing Hyenas
Hard Times
Touch And Go

Grab a bottle, shut the shades, slap this disc on, crank the volume, and prepare yourself for 43 minutes of blues in its purest, dirtiest form. From the opening riffs of "Just Can't Win" to the majestic swagger of "Each Dawn I Die," the Laughing Hyenas don't let up for a second. This music rubs salt into the wounds of heartache and spits and rages with the indignation of the jilted. The tempos grind between mid "Hard Time Blues," and the slower than slow "You're So Cruel." This lot have lived through every drunken moment of pain, and here they're throwing it back at you in a mesh of sound where no one part counts less than any other. The vocals, bass, guitar, and drums, thump, screech, rumble, and roar in unison to create a surrounding wall of Motor City rock and roll. Yes they come on like the bastard sons (and daughter) of an unholy union of the Stones and the Stooges (with Tom Waits as godfather), but instead of mindlessly rehashing old tunes, they're pumping new life into the blues, busting out a thunderous noise for the 90s.—**Greg Fabb**



SKIN

Paul Sharpe's current top five albums

1. Portishead: *Dummy*
2. Digable Planets: *Blowout Combe*
3. Dinosaur Jr.: *Greenmind*
4. Redman: *Dare Is A Darkside*
5. Fugazi: *Steady Diet To Nothing*

ART BY NATHAN PETERS

Layne Staley Mike McCready Barrett Martin Baker

The debut album. Out now. Produced by Mad Season and Brett Eliason. On Columbia CDs, Cassettes, MiniDiscs, and Vinyl.

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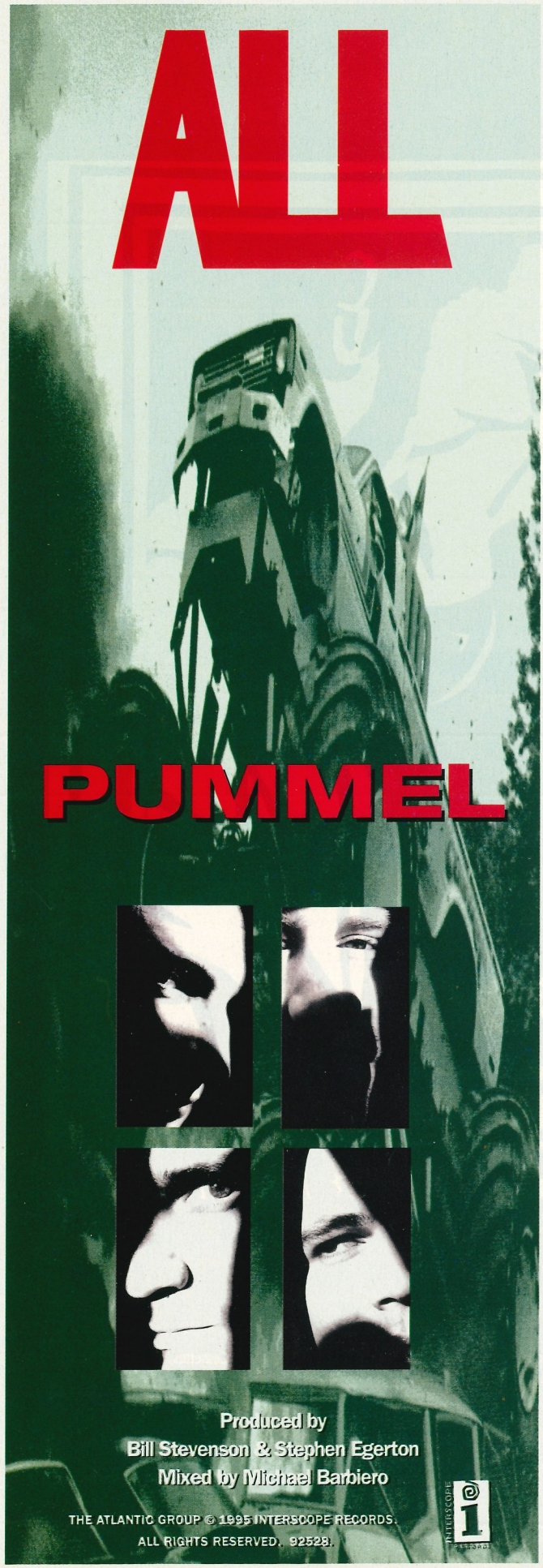
ALL



PUMMEL

Produced by
Bill Stevenson & Stephen Egerton
Mixed by Michael Barbiero

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GOODWILL GAMES® '98

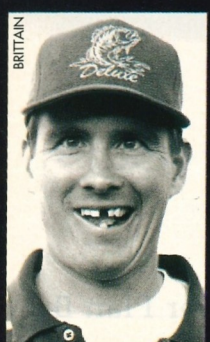
Having successfully chaperoned ten American skaters to the Goodwill Games in Russia last year, **Sonja Catalano** and **Jean Hoffman** of CASL/PSL fame are busy working out a proposal to have skateboarding included in the 1998 New York games. The success of the skateboarding program at the Russian games will work to their advantage, as will the fact that the 1998 games will be more accessible to skaters in the U.S.

Team U.S.A. at the 1994 Goodwill Games in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Once upon a time, there was a skatepark in Rockford, Illinois called the **Rotation Station**, and it was home to skaters from all over the Midwest for at least four years. A while ago the park closed, and skaters in the area lost their precious ramp haven. But alas, this did not keep them down for long because a bunch of them got together, rented a warehouse, built a giant mini-ramp structure inside, and called it the **P.I.T. (Private Indoor Terrain)**. The park is pretty much a private club, but they do let out-of-towners ride for a small donation of five dollars. If you need any additional information on the P.I.T., please feel free to contact **Rob Miller** at: **(815) 636-0161**

If you've seen the Airwalk commercial on MTV, then you probably know that **Jason Lee** is born to act. Well, it seems that someone in Hollywood also feels that way and gave Jason the lead role in the follow-up to ***Clerks,*** called ***Mall Rats,*** which started filming in Minneapolis, Minnesota on April 1. Jason's girlfriend in the movie is none other than ex-*Beverly Hills 90210's* Brenda character, **Shannen Doherty**. We're all looking forward to seeing Jason's big-screen debut.

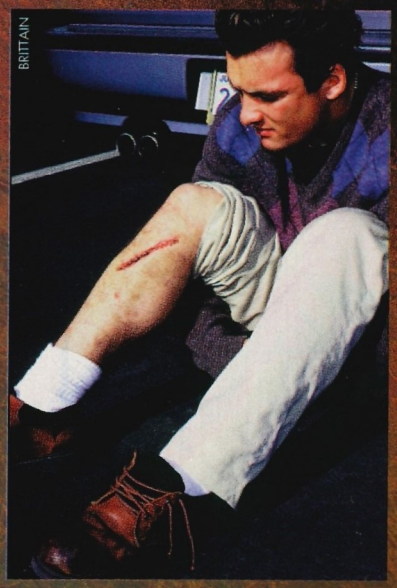
The everchanging life and times of Carlsbad's **Rob Dotson** are always interesting to put in print. Rob has been sponsored by no less than four skateboard manufacturers over the years and is currently with Evol, which we reported sometime last year. He worked at the Encinitas skate shop Street Life for years, and when XYZ opened in his hometown of Carlsbad, he defected his Street Life post. After about a year with **Tommy Caudill** and the boys, he was offered a job working for T-Bags clothing (also in Carlsbad), and Rob made the transition from shop salesman to clothing mogul. Recently, Airwalk offered Rob a position as team manager for the skateboarding portion of the large-marge shoe company, and he accepted. Oh, if you're wondering, Rob still skates in the factory-sponsored ranks—he probably has the record for most consecutive years in that category. Rob is hot!



Etnies' Don Brown.

The city of **San Francisco** now has an ordinance outlawing skateboarding anywhere in the city limits one-half hour after the sun goes down. That's the truth. Will it work? I doubt it.

New School pro **Pete Mihalenko** went to the hospital last week to have a small part of the muscle in his elbow tucked back in and sewn up. Pete sustained the injury by bombing a hill at 8:00 a.m. on a Sunday morning to get a pack of smokes. Pete had that morning-after feeling and a borrowed board with slack trucks. He lost control, hit a reflector, and flew into the asphalt. He was lucky enough to have a driver stop and give him a ride back up the hill. The middle-aged lady remarked, "I know how you feel. I did the same thing when I was your age." It just goes to show you that smoking does damage your health.

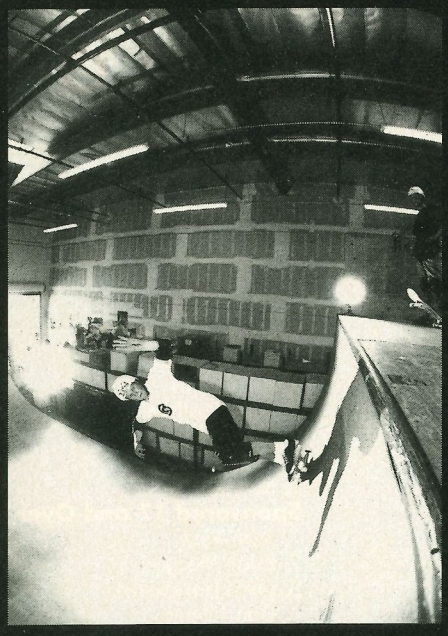


Kris Markovich was snowboarding recently when he took a hefty slam and came out of his bindings, the edge of his board sliced a pretty healthy gash in his shin that required fourteen staples. Kris was feeling no pain when the above photos were taken and will be skating again and filming like a madman for the new Prime video by the time you read this.

It looks like the **Radlands** pro contest is happening again this year on the weekend of July 7–9, and just like the two previous years, it will be both street and vert. There will be fewer spectators let in because of safety reasons, and on the Friday the seventh only the pros will be allowed to skate, unlike last year when anyone who owned a skateboard rode the course during practice.

EASTERN EXPOSURE 2

It's amazing what you can do with just one video camera—**Dan Wolfe** is living proof of the previous statement. This second solo effort is a bit of a gem. It features a good spread of all the top East Coast skaters, pros like: **Pepe Martinez**, **Fred Gall**, **Matt Reason**, **Ricky Oyola**, **Tom Boyle**, **Darren Mendito**, and **Jahmal Williams**. If you're not content with the above list, then there's an am one that's just as impressive: **Donny Barley**, **Bam Margera**, **Lil' Stevie**, **Jimmy Chung**, and many, many more. The filming is super clean, and the whole video runs real smooth from the start to finish. It's a constant reminder that the East Coast is here to stay. I didn't get the chance to see the first *Eastern Exposure* video, but I heard that Fred Gall's part was sick. Anyway, one, two, or both—definitely worth checking out.—**D.P.**

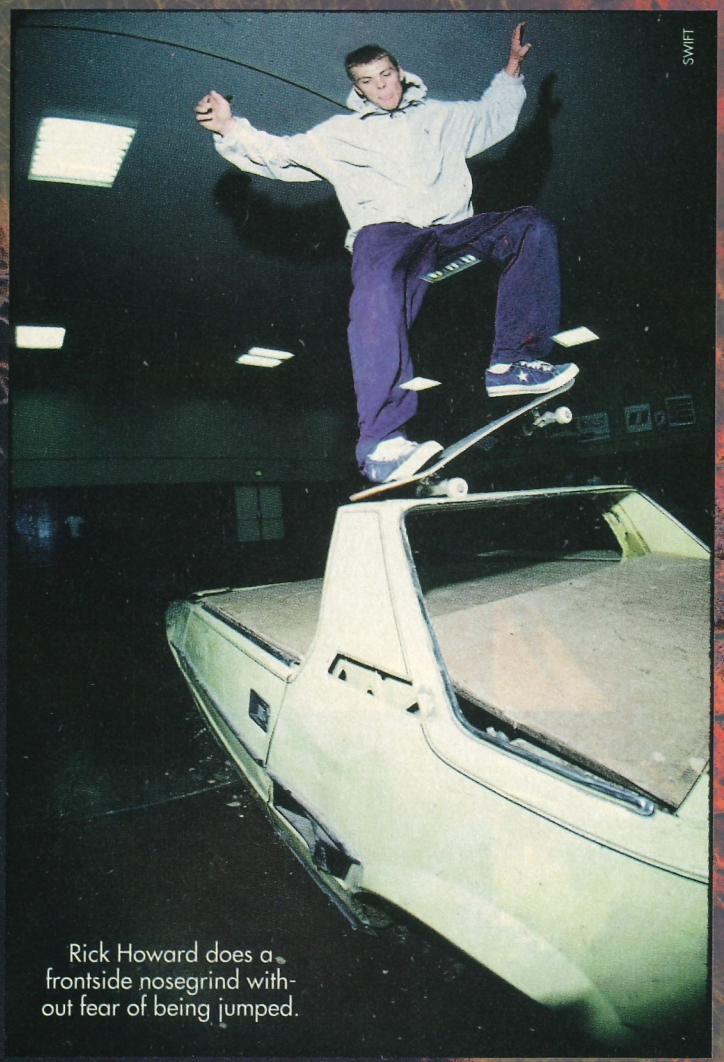


plan b skateboards
danny way
vert
morris photos

mandatory afro nation

WHO RIDES WHAT?

Keenan Milton skates for Chocolate. **Henry Sanchez** is doing something with Experience; it's called Profile. **Chad Muska** and **Donny Barley** are on Toy Machine. **Josh Kalis** switched to Alien. **Kareem Campbell**, **Eric Koston**, **Rob Dyrdek**, **Ronnie Bertino**, and **Kris Markovich** all ride for a new truck company called Orion. **Paul Sharpe** skates for Foundation. **Jordan Richter** switched to Goodtimes. Powell has just recruited two new pros to add to their growing team, and they are Boston's **Jahmal Williams** and ex-Prime rider **Mike Santarossa**. **Rob "Sluggo" Boyce**, who was one of the original Real team riders back when they started, is now riding for World Industries. **Tony Briseno** is now skating for Sonic. Amateurs **Jimmy Chadwick** and **Jeremy Deglopper** have joined up with Tree Fort skateboards.



SWIFT

Rick Howard does a frontside nosegrind without fear of being jumped.

Another camera incident follows last month's mishap involving **Chuck Wampler**, who was shot four times at Lockwood School in Los Angeles. This time the victim was none other than Girl Skateboards owner **Rick Howard**. The act occurred at the intersection of Fountain and Vermont in the city of Hollywood, California, where Rick was filming **Paulo Diaz** for the upcoming Chocolate video when an unidentified jacker came up from behind and tried to roll dear ol' Rick. This is where our hero's natural instincts took over, and he fended off the attacker with his bare hands. The two wrestled out in the middle of the street until the robber decided Rick was too much for him and high-tailed it away from the scene. During the scuffle, Rick dropped the camera, but only a few scratches were noticed. Kids, don't try this at home.

C.A.S.L. FINALS
February 25–26, 1994
Climax Skatepark
Oceanside, California

Minis
1. Carlos Hernandez
2. Clark Hassler
3. Austen Seholm
4. Eric Strand
5. Greg Haidl

Novice
1. Kevin Sturdevant
2. Rory Carey
3. Josh Brubaker
4. Dana Shayegan
5. Blake Velilla

2A
1. Jeremiah Bietz
2. Gabe Correia
3. Calen Thompson
4. Rene Dominquez
5. Ryan Darnel

3A
1. Desmond Martin
2. Keith Hurlic
3. Matt Gongloff
4. Wes Watanabe

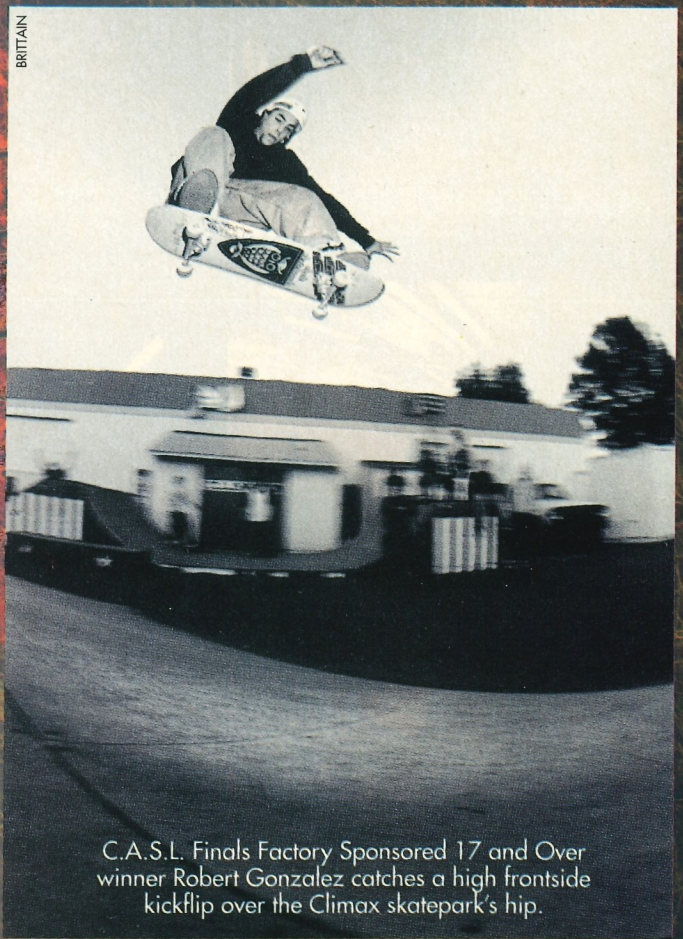
Sponsored 14 and Under
1. J.P. Jadeed
2. Gabe Ryan
3. Shaun Kittrell
4. Dave Simpson
5. Chad Duff
6. Steve Venesco

Sponsored 15–16
1. James Bates
2. B.J. Collins
3. Ryan Pasiliao
4. Tonee Gaddis
5. Freddie Litch
6. Kurt Miller

Sponsored 17 and Over
1. John Vest
2. Brian Morgan
3. Chris Hornbecker
4. Dan Tillman
5. Carlos Aleman
6. Orlando Welsh

Factory 16 and Under
1. Tom Krauser
2. Malcolm Watson
3. Ryan Kenreich
4. Josh Neher
5. Mario Coronado
6. Steffan Attardo

Factory 17 and Over
1. Robert Gonzales
2. Dennis Dipietrantonio
3. Roger Konold
4. Juan Montero
5. Erik Villalobos
6. Bert Bradley



BRITTAIN

C.A.S.L. Finals Factory Sponsored 17 and Over winner Robert Gonzalez catches a high frontside kickflip over the Climax skatepark's hip.

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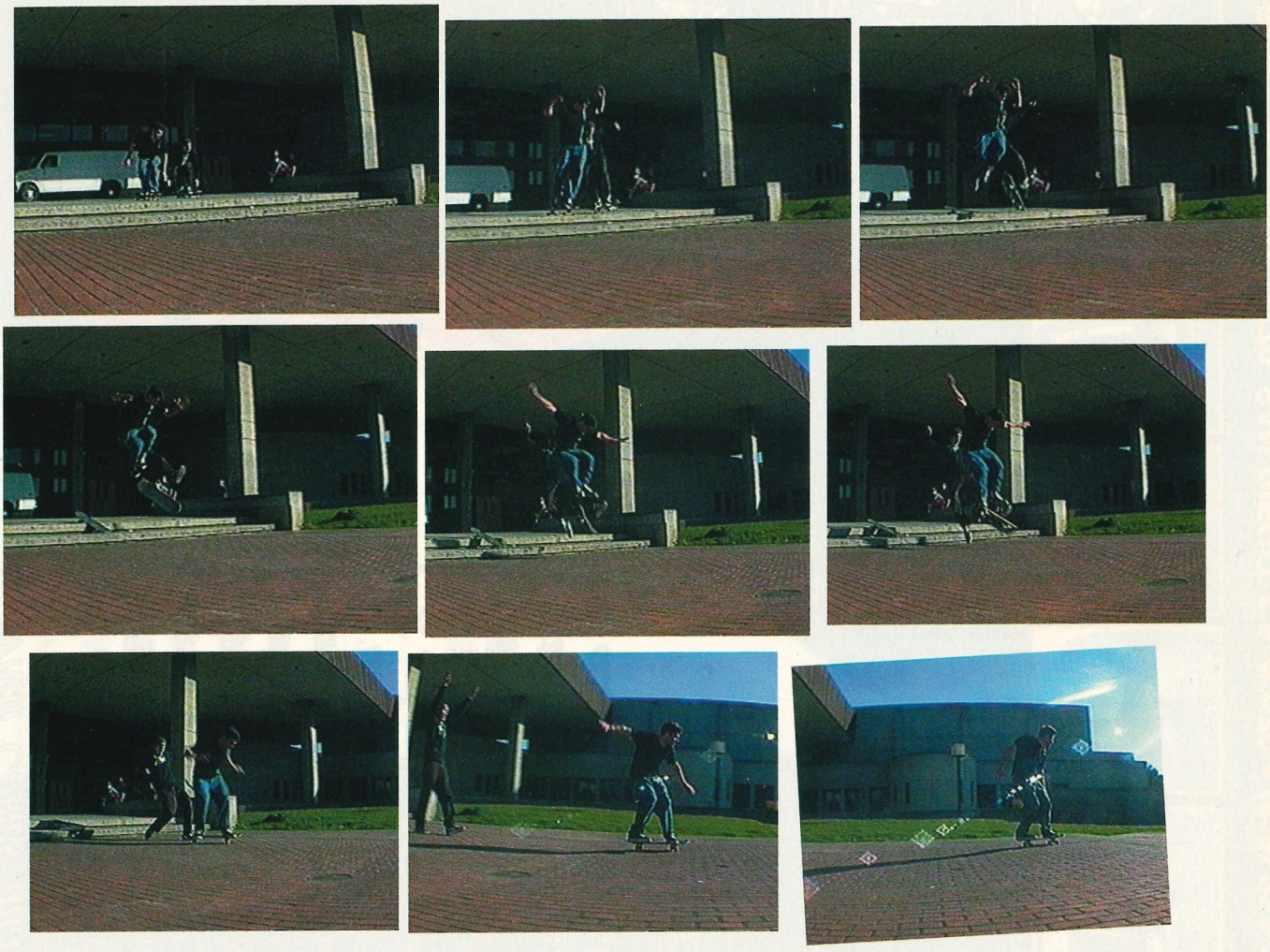

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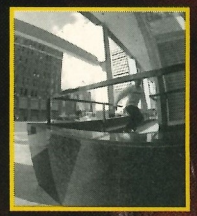
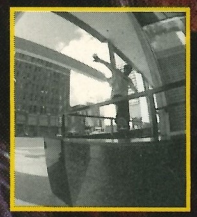
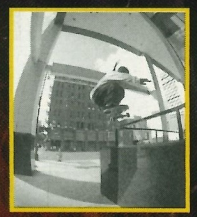
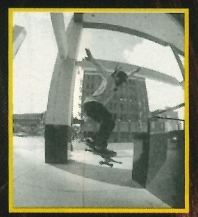
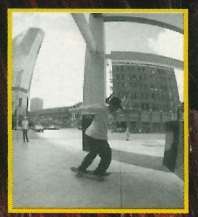
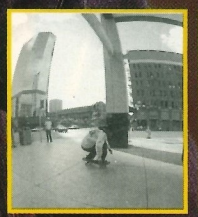
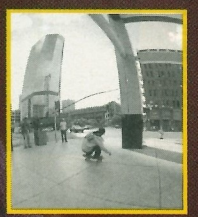
What Comes and Goes

The mind can be, what comes and goes
A flow like nature, beyond control
Our view of life has more to come
More see fast than slow for some
If growth of self has gone to hate
Then search environment to truly relate
For life evolves like seeds to trees
A soul uplifted has more to see
Become your being and flow with life
Experience each measure unbounded by strife
The state of existence is more than you know
The mind can be, what comes and goes

by Kien Lieu

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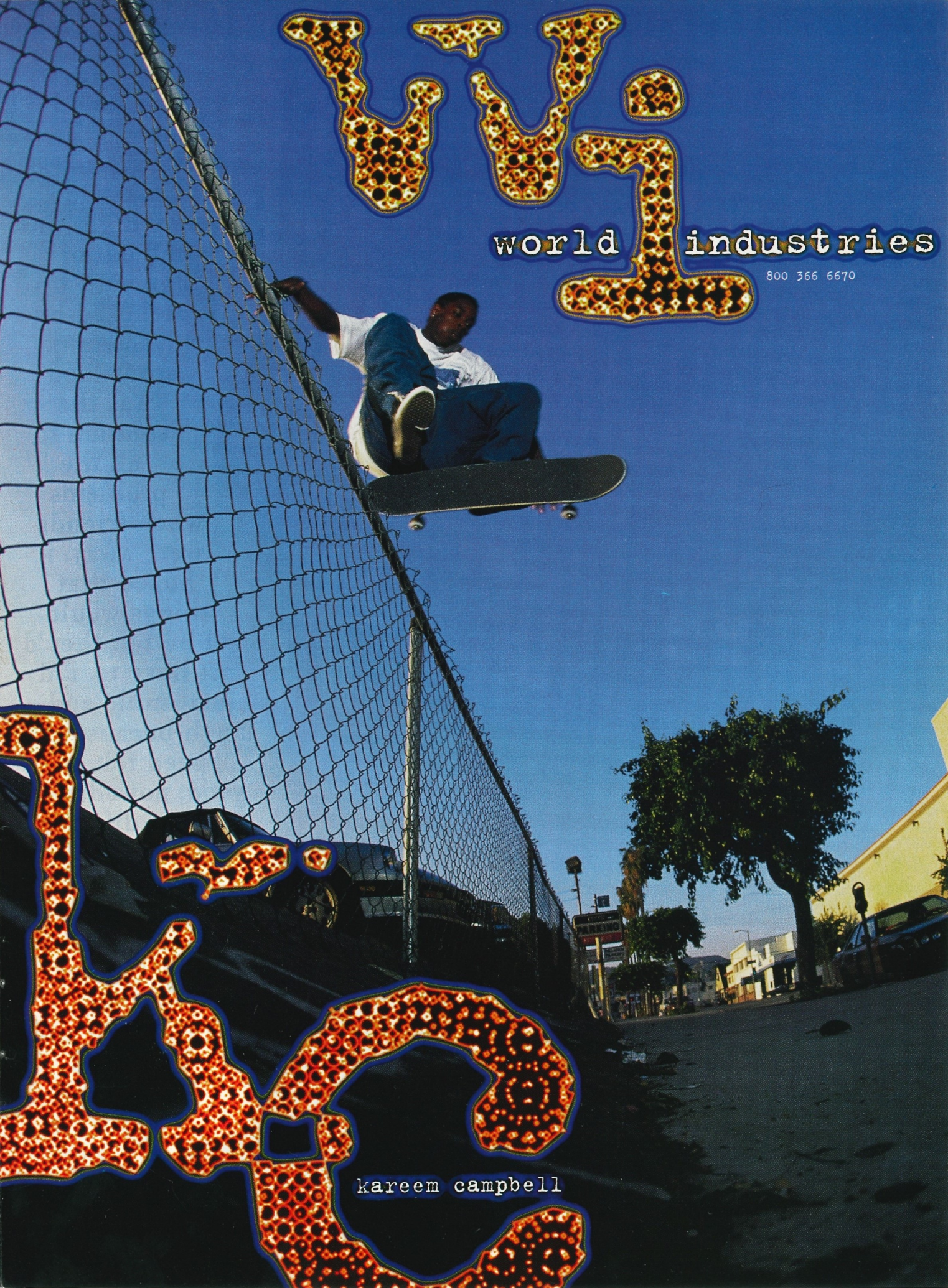
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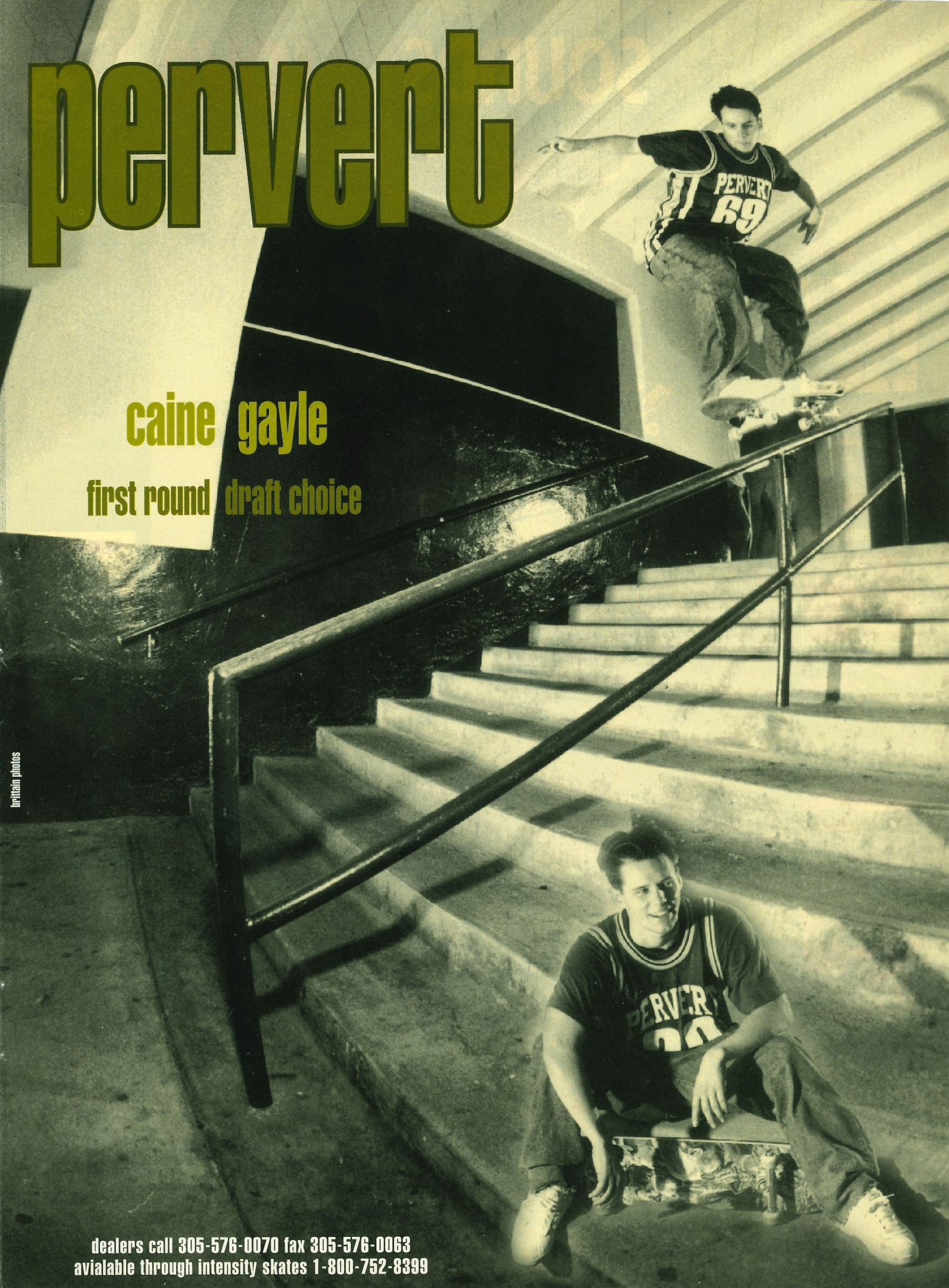
at times when things were bad at home or when life wasn't seeming too fine, i' d get the hell out of dodge with my skateboard by myside. my stuntwood was the solution to all the problems when friends were away. i hoped that things would get better, they'd just have to. i' d just smile and laugh because the speed felt so good. nowadays i see that different problems continue to pound my head and never seem to get easier, but my skateboard and that good feeling will always stay.

made by a workhorse named
nathan peters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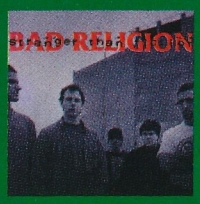

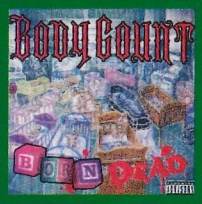

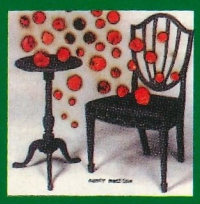

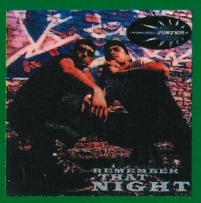

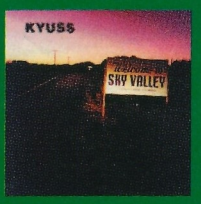

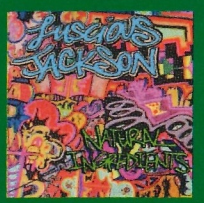

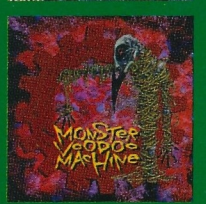

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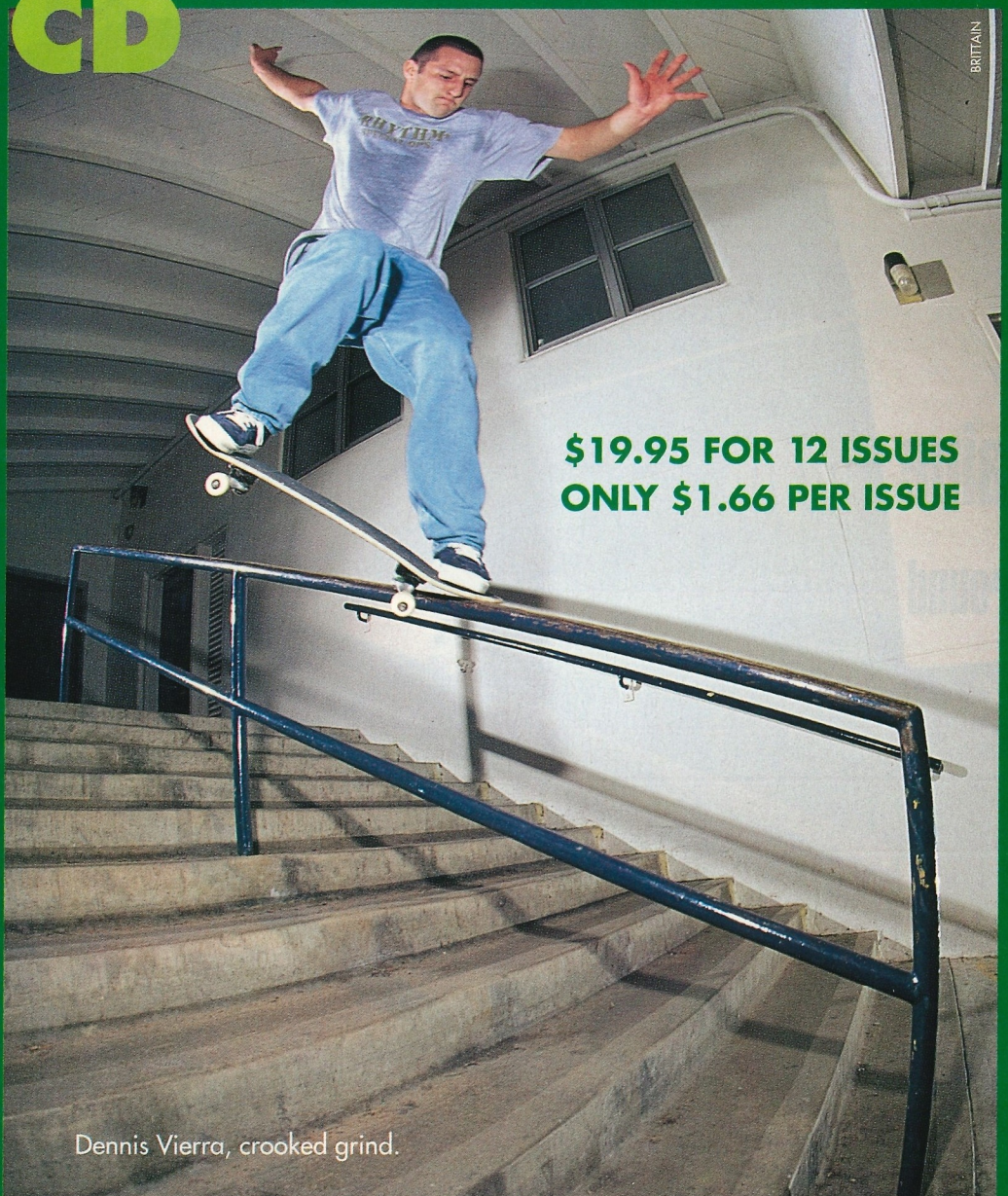

Dennis Vierra, crooked grind.

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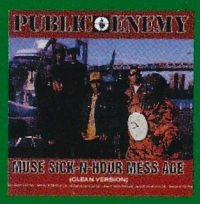

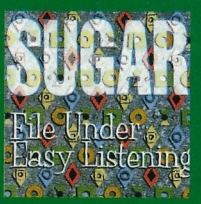

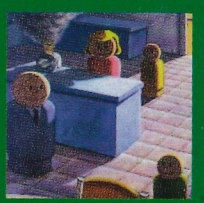

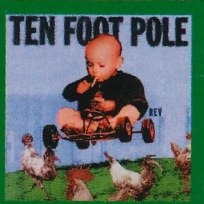

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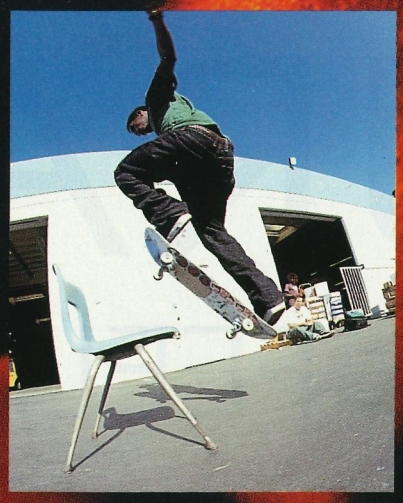
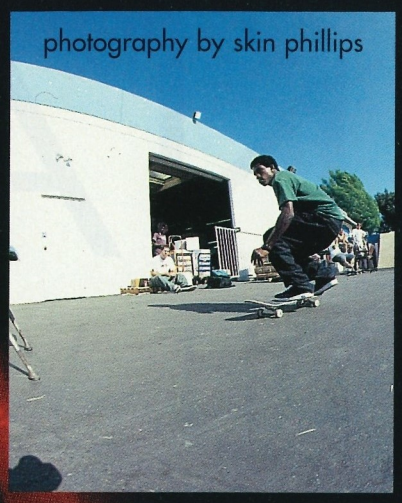
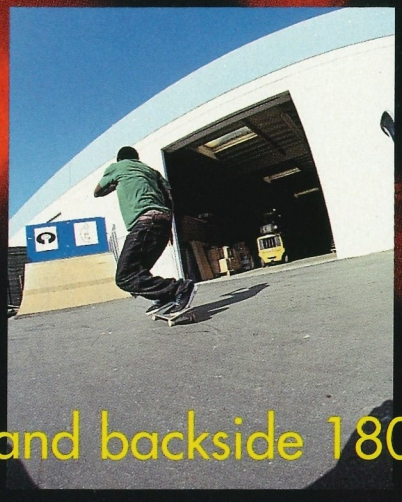
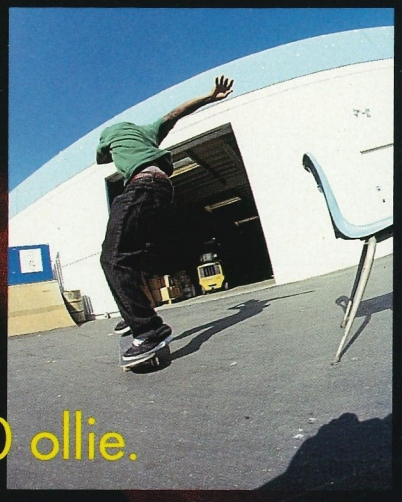
STARTING POINT

With Tabias Walker

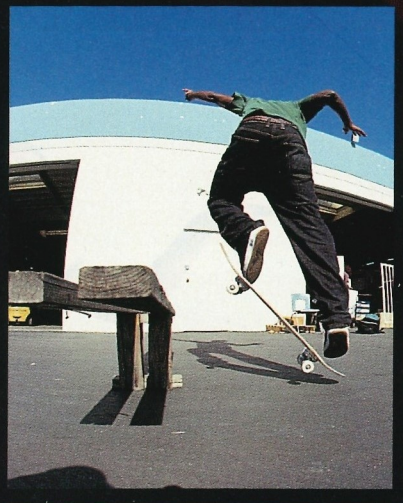
Here's two tricks which are very similar to each other; the frontside and then backside 180. Once you've mastered the ollie, move on up and try these. Most of today's tricks revolve around the three moves in starting points one and two.

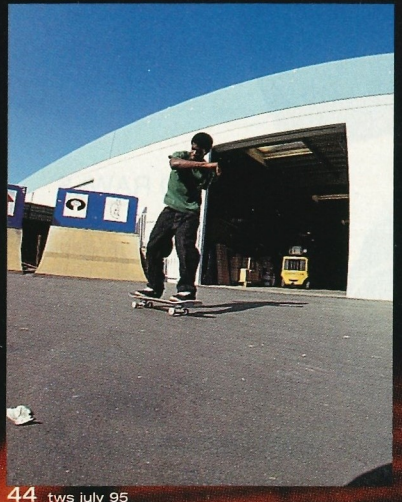
photography by skin phillips



Frontside and backside 180 ollie.





1. Approach the obstacle.
2. Have your feet set however you feel comfortable.
3. Pop the tail, and bring your front foot around—don't lean too far back. With the backside 180, bring your back foot around.
4. Bring it down and roll away.

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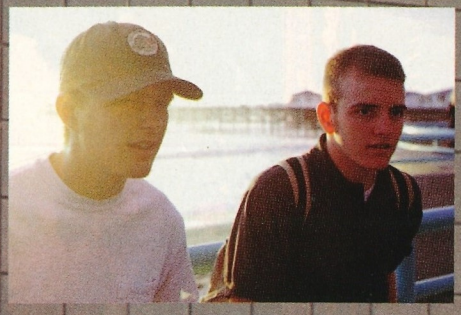

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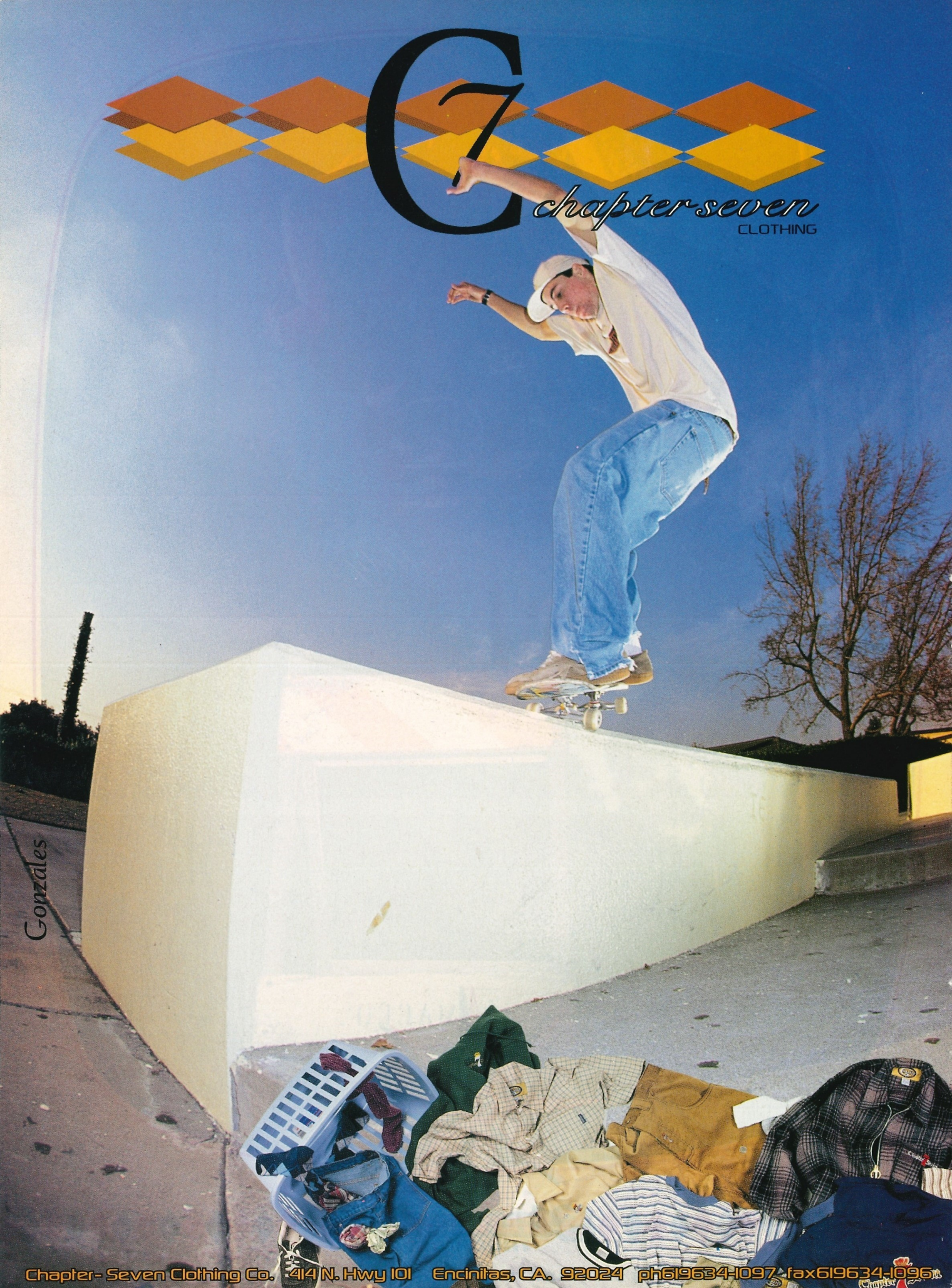

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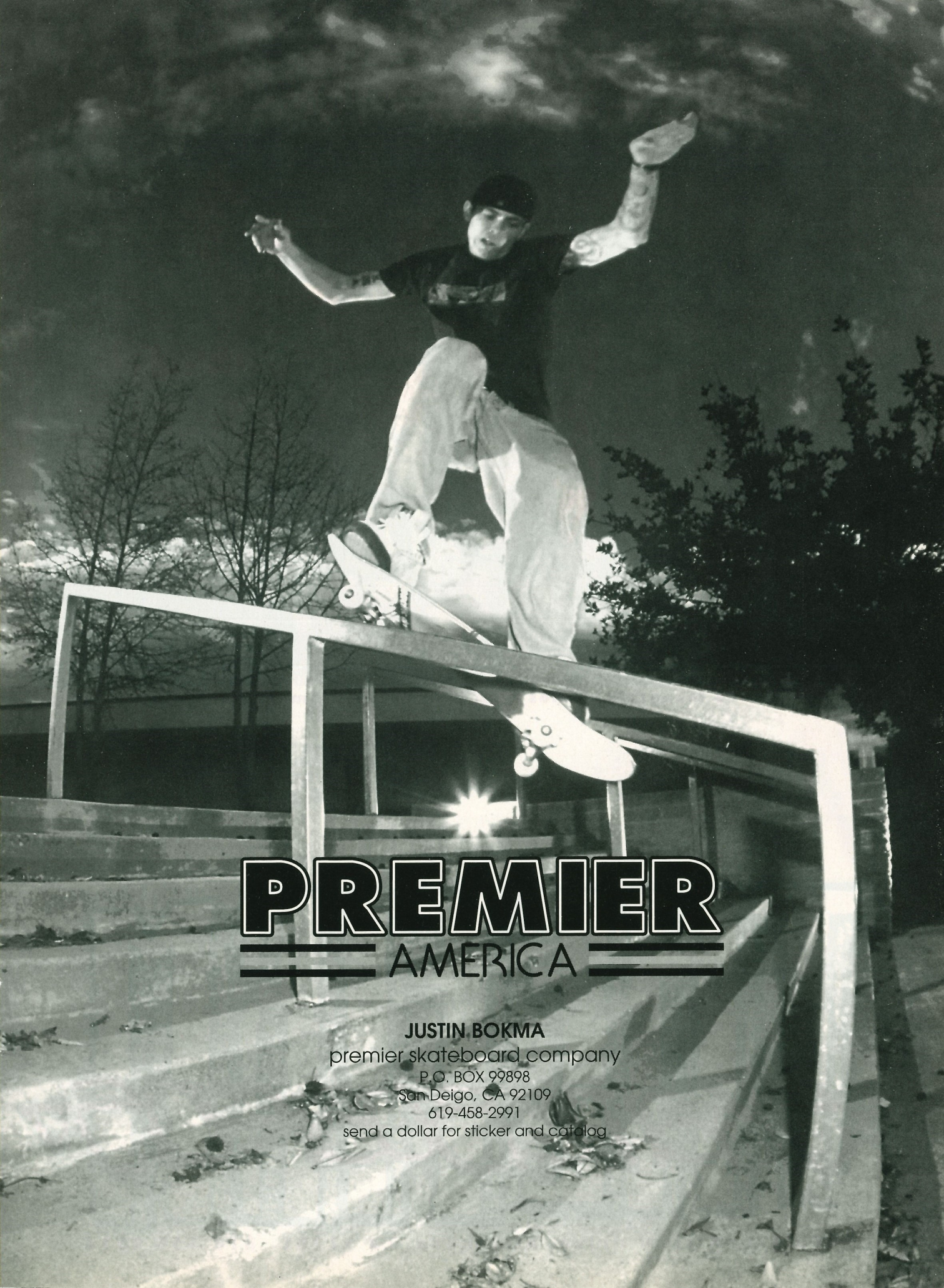

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chet thomas

All studio photography by J. Grant Brittain

In a one-hour session at the Channel One/Acme ramp in Costa Mesa, Chet proved to be one of the, if not *the*, best mini-ramp skaters ever. Kickflip lien air.

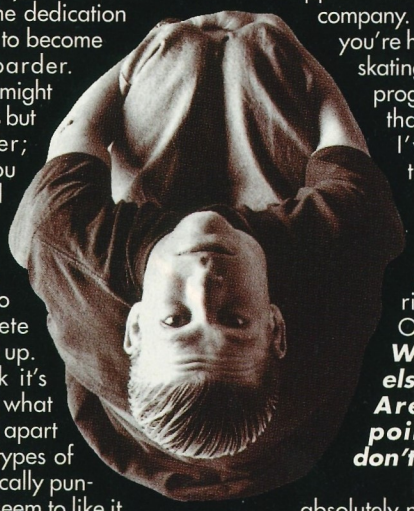
Respectability
an earned trait

When someone grows up in the skateboarding spotlight, as has Chet Thomas, respect becomes a big issue. Who has it, who wants it, who's earned it. Many professional skaters feel they've earned their colleagues' and critics' respect by simply being affiliated with a particular company, or via video parts and advertisements, but few show true dedication and love for a sport by giving as much as they've gotten. Such is Chet Thomas.

His views on skateboarding are a rocky landscape full of peaks and valleys; each view is thoroughly thought out and formed by experiences ... good and bad. The words in his interview, he decided, should be brief, and when I saw all of his photos and video grabs, I agreed. So he and I sat down at dinner and talked about what he would like to say. The following is a product of two things, our two-hour dinner together, and Chet's entire grown life ... but mostly Chet's life. I have an enormous amount of respect for Chet ... he's earned every ounce of it. Please, enjoy.—Joel

What do you respect about skateboarding? Define what is respectable.

There're few things respectable in skateboarding these days—the first things that come to mind are that skateboarding is truly an artistic, creative, and non-limiting sport compared to many sports in the general public eye. There are no rules in skateboarding, no judges telling you what you can or can't do—that's beside the ignorant police or the other skaters who think that they decide what tricks you should be doing. I respect the dedication and effort it takes to become a good skateboarder. Good in your eyes might be bad in another's but it doesn't matter; whatever level you are at, it took hard work and dedication to get there.



It's not always easy to smash the concrete and get right back up. I sometimes think it's crazy, but this is what sets skateboarders apart from many other types of athletes. We physically punish ourselves and seem to like it, or the fun we are having skateboarding makes us forget about what we are actually doing: destroying ourselves.

I respect skateboarding because it's truly fun, and whoever thinks differently should seriously think of giving it up. The variety of tricks to do is endless. Learning new tricks may be frustrating, but it is definitely fun when you push yourself and accomplish what you set out to do. A good session can keep me happy for days, and this happiness essentially comes from the fun of skateboarding.

You ride for Channel One, how did that come about?

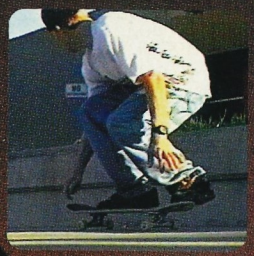
After I left Santa Cruz, I called someone I've known for quite a while, Marty Jimenez. I asked if I could ride for Channel One, because he used to be a professional skater, too. It's good to ride for somebody I truly respect and who appreciates what I do for the company. He knows that when you're having fun with your skating, that's the time you progress the most. I feel that in the past year I've progressed tremendously—riding for Marty has played a big part in this progression. So here I am riding for Channel One.

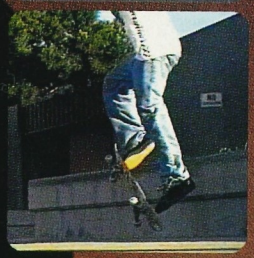
What do pro models mean to you? Are you disappointed that you don't have one?

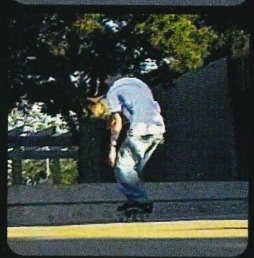
Pro models mean absolutely nothing to me.

Do you think everyone with a pro model deserves one?

Definitely not. There are so many people who seemed to pop out of nowhere with a model. I can't name all the people who have pro models these days, but I definitely know all the ones





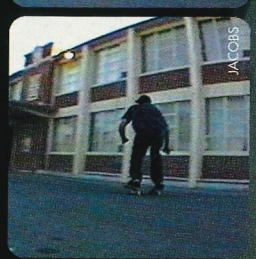


Sequence: Like a faucet, trick after trick pours out of Chet. Kickflip backside nosegrind at one of the many Huntington Beach elementary schools. Below: Switch-stance frontside 180.

ORTIZ

Chet never backs down, always completely committed to accomplishing that which he attempts. Video sequence: Nollie backside 180 kickflip at Artichoke High. Photo: Frontside crooked grind.

SKIN



This page (clockwise from upper-left): Switch-stance frontside 180 kickflip. Inward varial kickflip backside 180 at the Huntington Beach Skatepark. Switch-stance frontside nosegrind.

who deserve it because they worked for it. Getting a model today is much easier; before it was something you looked forward to and strived for. These days skaters are only a quarter of the way to where they deserve to be called a professional skateboarder.

It used to be that shops had to call up the skate companies and demand a model because everybody was asking for it. Now companies are bombarding the shops begging to sell them some "new" pro model. Most of the time the shops, ask, "Who is that, I've never heard of him." It's not right, so I don't even bother with having a pro model, because the model does not get you respect, your skateboard abilities do.

You are the most underrated skateboarder I know of. How do you feel about this?

To tell you the truth, it doesn't bother me to know that I'm underrated. I guess I actually like it, because I don't want to be blown into something that I'm not. I like showing up places and surprising people with skateboard abilities, and have people say, "You're skating good," rather than showing up and not landing a single trick when you're supposed to be the goods. There are a lot of people who have been blown into superstars, in kids' eyes, by the company they ride for. This usually happens by having an excellent video part, but when you see these people skate in real life, you sort of get let down when they can't make one trick in three hours. I don't want people to get the misconception that I think all of the pros who are labeled the goods are not, because there is a good portion of them who can definitely back their stuff up very strongly.

Basically, what I'm trying to say is that I would prefer to always be the underdog and prove my abilities, rather than be completely overrated and just let the cool company you ride for carry your name until people realize you're not as good as they say you are. People think it's a fact that if you ride for one of the "dope" companies, you're automatically a great skateboarder. Open your eyes, people, this is nothing but fiction.

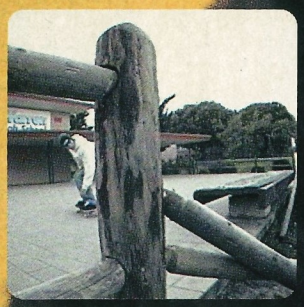
I have heard some rumors of retirement. Are they true?

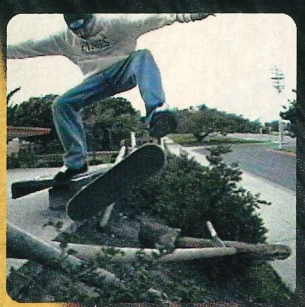
Who knows, I might stop having fun in a month, a year, or two. When I stop having fun is when I will wave the flag and kiss skateboarding goodbye.

Tell me about being a sports chiropractor. What prompted you to shoot for this goal?

Being a sports chiropractor has always been my goal in life, not being a pro skateboarder. My parents always taught me to shoot for goals that

Switch-stance inward varial kickflip.





Switch-stance heelflip.

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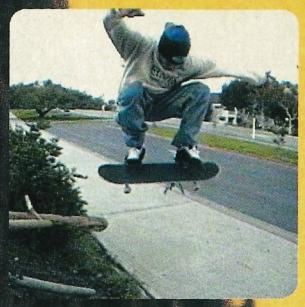

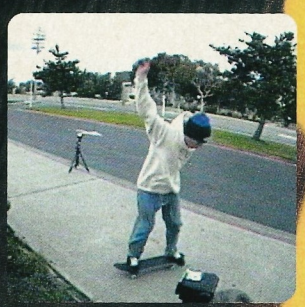

SKIN

pay off in the long run, nothing short-term like skateboarding. Skating just sort of fell into my lap. I started to skate, and still skate because it's fun, not because a lot of kids dream of this. You need to focus on bigger and better things than just skateboarding. Skating is such a minute part of one's life, and a lot of people don't realize this. They think that they are clocking bank making two grand a month and spending every penny of it on fresh shoes and tilted hats. Wake up, man, this kind of cash is in the poverty level!

What happens when I break my leg so badly that I can never skate again, or rupture a disk in my back, blow out a knee and fold my ankles so hard that I can't even walk, let alone skate? I feel good knowing that I will have something to fall back on in case this does happen, unlike a lot of people who think skating is, and is going to be, their life. I can't stress enough how important going to school and achieving a higher level of education is. It's one of the few ways to become successful later in life, that's what I'm planning and striving for, and know that I will accomplish, by becoming a chiropractor.

Is it cool in skating to have plans for the future?

I really don't know if skateboarders think it's cool or not. I really don't care if they do think it's uncool, because I know that having plans for the future is the smart thing to do. I've noticed that most skaters don't have plans for the future, but I don't know their reasons for this.

Is there anyone that you'd like to thank for helping you get to where you are today?

Sequence: Alley-oop frontside kickflip from hell. Above: Inward varial kickflip.

Yes, there is. First I want to thank Steve Saiz for getting me started on the right track and for getting me on Powell eight years ago. If it wasn't for him, I probably wouldn't be where I am today. Todd Hastings and Stacey Peralta gave me a great push into my skateboard career. Tim Brown, Guy Takayama, and Mark Roshay at Newport Spine And Sport put my body back into working order. All the boys in the Volcom family for all the generous support they have given me over the years. Marty at Channel One for giving me a second wind in motivation. Don, Pierre, and Steve at Etnies for giving me shoes. Mr. Andy Ouellette at Sam-Pai Kenpo self-defense studios in Huntington Beach, Steve Graham at Reality Snowboards, and Shannon and Shane at Black Flys. Most importantly, all of my bros who have been there to back me up when I needed them, especially my brothers Matt and Ryan ●

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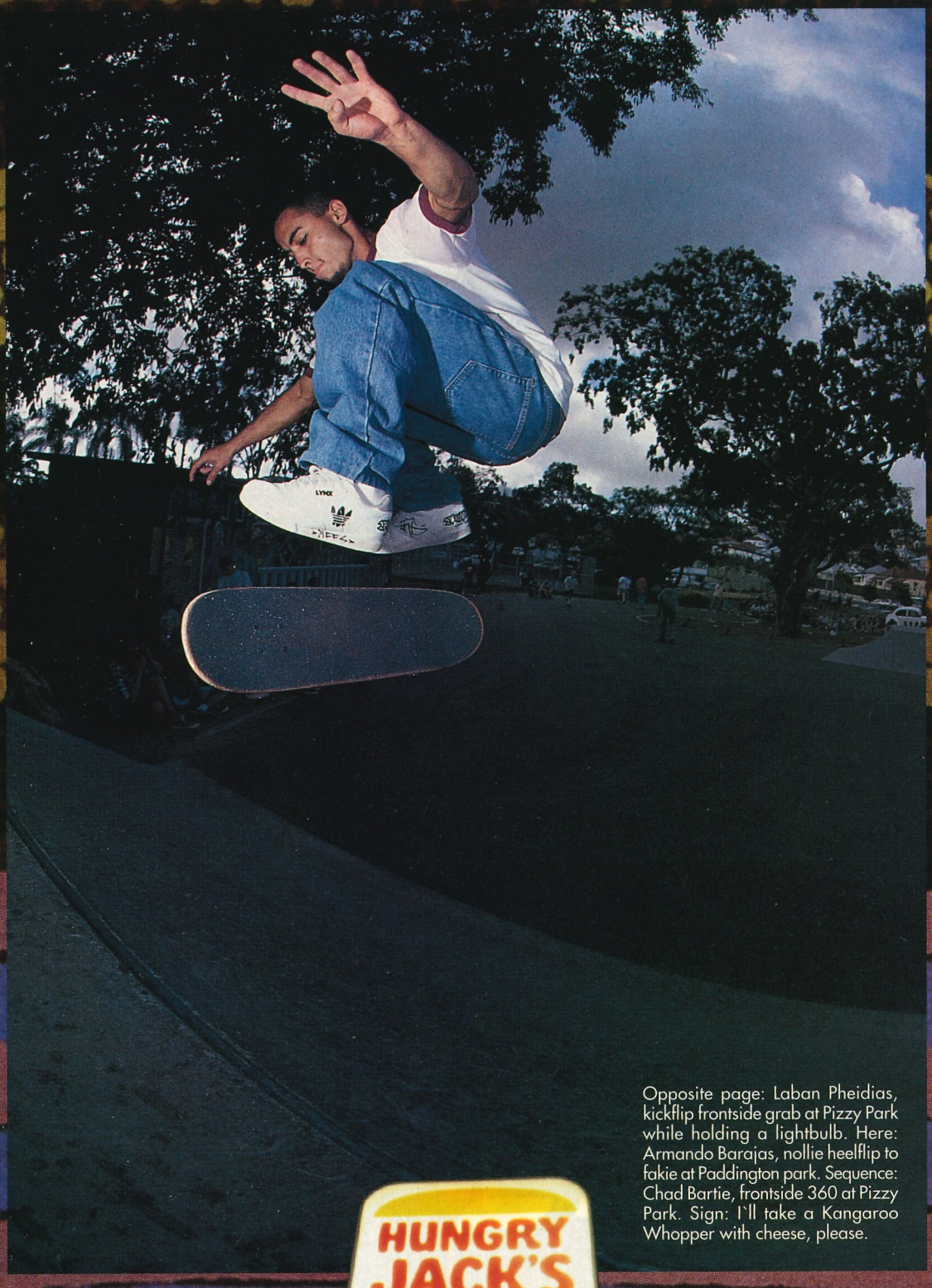
Frontside 180 kickflip at Samurai School, San Diego.

Under Where?

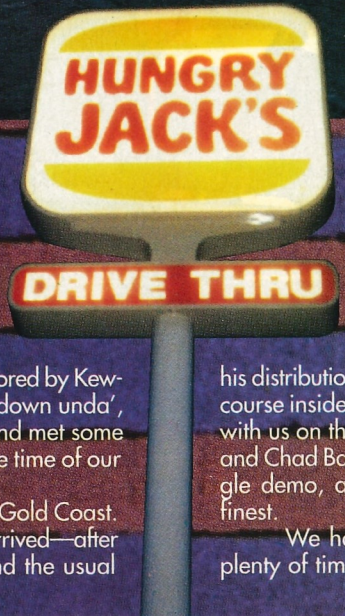
AARON BROWN

by Laban Pheidias
Video by Jamie Bartie

AARON BROWN



Opposite page: Laban Pheidias, kickflip frontside grab at Pizzy Park while holding a lightbulb. Here: Armando Barajas, nollie heelflip to fakie at Paddington park. Sequence: Chad Bartie, frontside 360 at Pizzy Park. Sign: I'll take a Kangaroo Whopper with cheese, please.

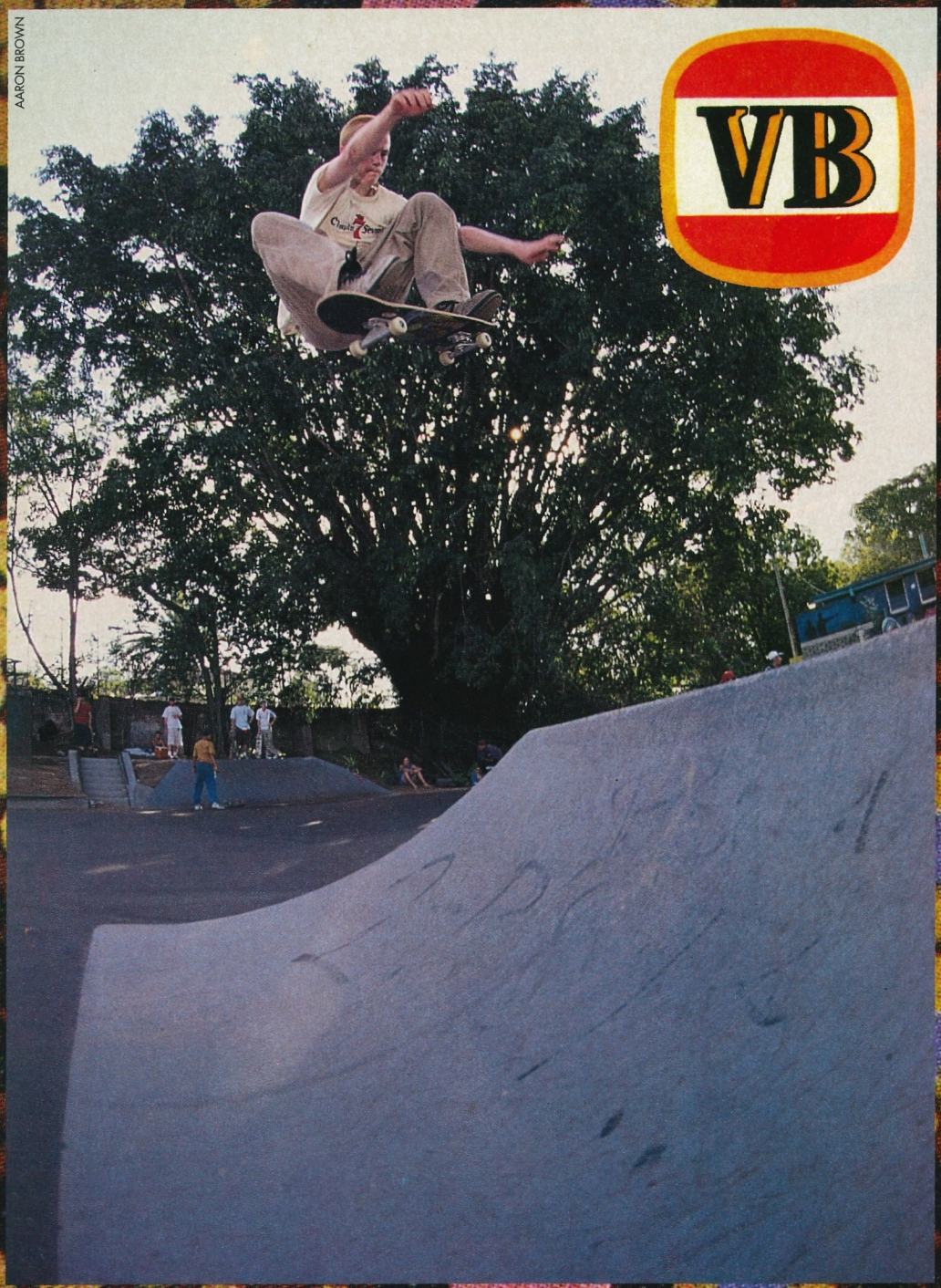


I'm talkin' about Australia, mate. The place famous for its kangaroos, boomerangs, koala bears, beaches, meat pies, Aboriginal art, good beer, and Vegemite, not to mention the abundance of fine women and awesome cement skateparks. Recently, Armando Barajas, Duane Pitre, and I took a three-week trip, sponsored by Kewday Distribution, to the beautiful land down unda', where we did a whole lot of demos, and met some new friends along the way. We had the time of our lives, and this is how it went:

Our first destination was the Gold Coast. It was hotter than hell when we finally arrived—after fifteen hours of straight flying time and the usual hassles of international travel, including long lines, going through customs, claiming baggage, and misplacing necessities like tickets and passports. Jamie Bartie (the half-owner of Kewday and the person responsible for managing our tour) met us at the airport and took us to his distribution warehouse, which has a fun little skate course inside. There were three Aussie skaters going with us on the tour: Morgan Campbell, Mick Yuen, and Chad Bartie. These guys busted out at every single demo, and are definitely some of Australia's finest.

We had one week on the Gold Coast with plenty of time for both business and pleasure. The

AARON BROWN

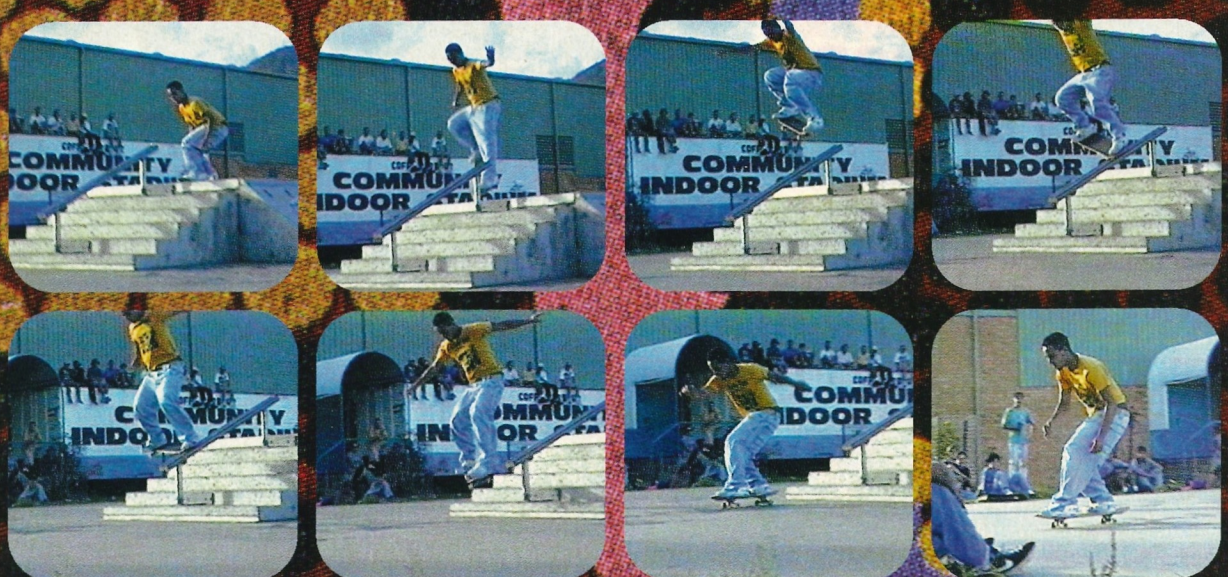


first demo was on New Year's Day at Pizzy Park, which is recognizable by the strange cement tunnels set into the blacktop street course. There is also a thirteen-foot bowl right across the field. We skated for hours while Dave Bartie (father of Jaime and Chad) was busy on the sidelines barbecuing burgers for all the hungry spectators. To top off the evening's events we did the mandatory sticker and product toss, which of course caused all the kids to go berserk.

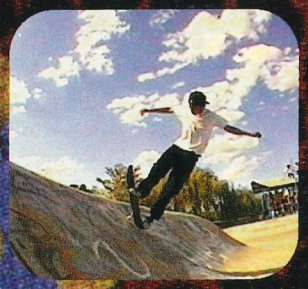
That night we counted backward from ten with a thousand drunk Aussies. Fireworks lit up the sky, and everyone cheered the new year. Hooray!

The next good demo was at the incredibly huge Beenleigh City Park. It has all sizes of cement and metal ramps, along with all sorts of blacktop and wooden obstacles. Armando took his skills to the railing with sick nollie nose grinds, while the rest of us sessioned the big yellow pyramid. The park was definitely worth the visit.

We took full advantage of our demo-free days. One day we went to

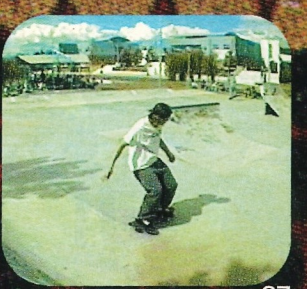


Captions: Top: Chad Bartie, lofty frontside ollie at Paddington Park. Inset: Victorian Bitter is a popular beer. Sequence: Armando Barajas, nollie noseslide on the railing at Coffs Harbour Park. Opposite page top: Morgan Cambell, backside heelflip at Paddington Park. Bottom: Kierle Park local, Wade Burkitt, with a backside ollie over the rail. Left sequence: Mick Yuen, switch inward heelflip at Bellconnen. Right sequence: Duane Pitre, 360 flip fakie at Bellconnen.

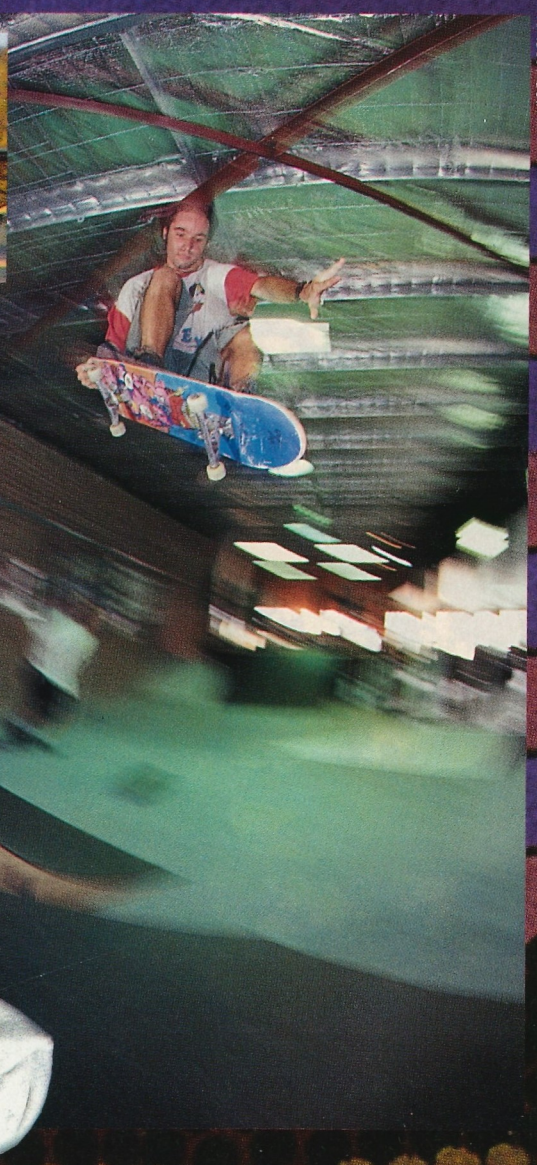


AARON BROWN

TRENT RODEN.



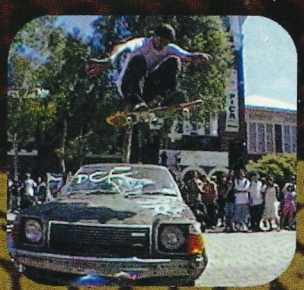
TRENT RODEN

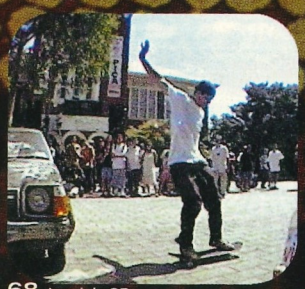


AARON BROWN

the animal sanctuary and saw many exotic creatures, like koala bears, dingoes, Tasmanian devils, goanas, and wombats; we even got to pet kangaroos and emus. Another time we ventured deep into the beautiful rainforests of Currumbin Valley; it was breathtaking! We jumped off cliffs, and slid down natural water-slides into a pool of rainwater.

Then time came to, once again, hit the road. We were slowly working our way south to Canberra, 1,400 kilometers away. We had demos for seven days in a row, along with numerous shop appearances in between. It all blended together into a repetitious routine of driving, skating, and sleeping. All in all, everything went pretty smooth except for a few minor incidents. Duane locked the keys in the van on a few occasions. One day we had to call a locksmith twice. Armando forgot that they drive on the other side of the road and had to do an Indiana Jones-style dive away from a speeding bus.





Then there was the demo at Kierle Park in Manly. It was our biggest turnout yet, with hundreds of enthusiastic skaters. The cement course was super fun with a fully equipped funbox, surrounded on all sides by transition with metal coping. When it came time for the product toss, things got a little hectic. I was surrounded by a mob of overanxious kids, and when I went to throw out a board, everyone went crazy. I was rushed off the funbox, and fell to the ground; the board was snatched from my hands, and I got trampled. Hooray!?

There was finally a break from demos for a couple days in the city of Sydney. We stayed at a plush hotel with an outdoor swimming pool on the roof of the building. I jumped off this fun, although sketchy, roof-to-pool gap, but I misjudged my leap and accidentally landed in the shallow end. Oops.

Sydney is Mick's hometown, so he took us around. I bought a couple CDs there at 30 dollars each. Prices are a lot higher in Australia. We also went to pubs, and played some Aussie-style pool. The tables and balls are smaller, and the rules are different. They play one-hundred percent slop, and if you scratch, or hit your opponent's ball first, then they

get two shots.

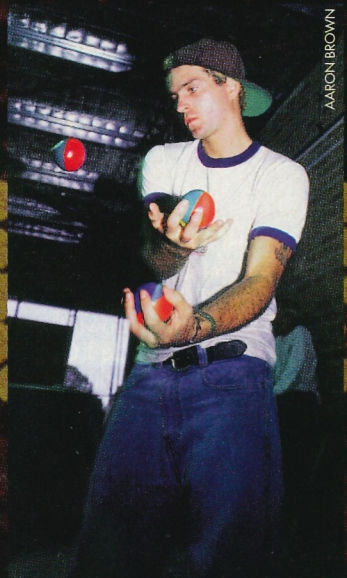
From Sydney we went straight to Canberra, where we had demos two days in a row at a park called Bellconnen. This was probably the best place we skated the whole time. It is a huge, smooth cement arena; filled with bowls, volcanoes, banks, hips, spines, a snake run, and all different-sized ramps; we mostly skated the steep banks. I remember Mick doing a switch-stance inward heelflip, Morgan doing backside heelflip big spins, Chad doing backside nollie heelflips, Duane did a smooth 360 flip to fakie, and Armando nollieing into the back of a cement launch ramp. I tried my luck on the metal vert ramp, subsequently, I got worked.

It came time to lose the van and get on a plane to Perth, 4,600 kilometers west. This was our final destination, with only two more demos left. I didn't think that it was possible for it to get any hotter than it had already been—until we arrived. It reached a scorching 38 degrees Celsius (that's 100 degrees Fahrenheit).

The skate scene in Perth is going strong, and the two demos were packed. Both of them had DJs; one even had a car as an obstacle. Of course, the crowd-pleasing launch ramp over the car session ensued. The best-trick award went to Morgan for doing a frontside nose grind across the roof and popping out over the back. As soon as the demo was over, it was time for the ritualistic sacrifice. I had to dodge flying glass particles. The car was totally annihilated and flipped over by the temporary anarchists. We then spent the next few hours signing autographs for the last time in Australia. That night we went to a pub, and the bartender recognized us and gave us a round of free drinks. Hooray!

Australia is the best place I've ever been, and I can't wait to go again next year. G'day •

AARON BROWN



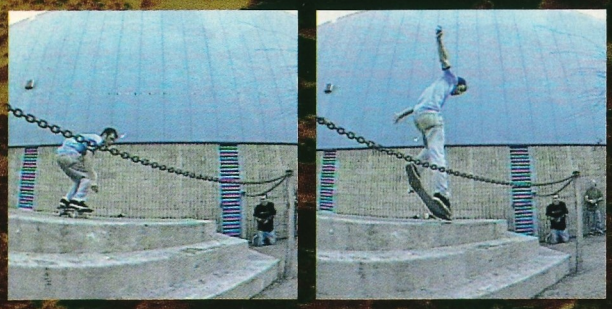
AARON BROWN

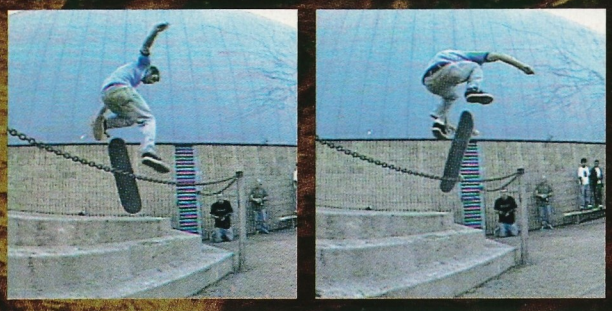
Opposite page top left: Armando had fun in hot Australia. Right: Toukley Park local, Nick Lae, frontside tailgrab. Inset: Nollie over the hip at Coffs Harbour by Armando. Sequence: Laban kickflipped the car in Perth. Four X is a very stong bitter ale. This page sequence: Morgan Cambell nosegrinded the car in Perth. Right: Duane Pitre, backside flip at Paddington Park. Bottom right: Laban did juggling shows after most of the demos.

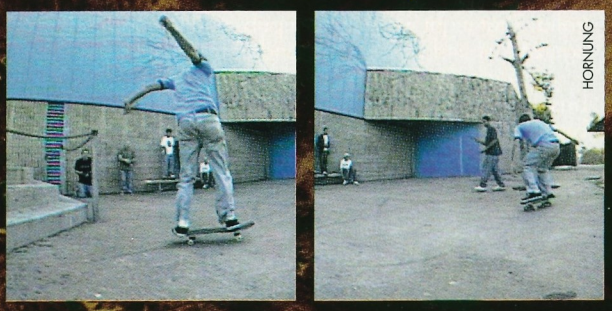
check out tony cox

Age: 19
From: Louisville, Kentucky
Home: Encinitas, California
Sponsor: ATM, Union, Duffs, REN

HEATHER ROSE HOWARD







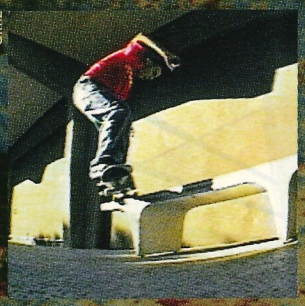
HORNUNG

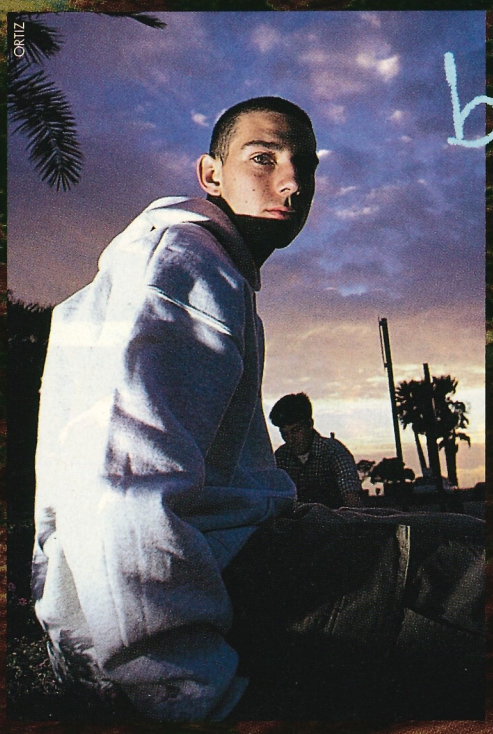
SWIFT

BACKGROUNDS BY NATHAN PETERS

Hi, I first met Tony Cox at a 411 show a couple of years ago in Indiana when he used to ride for Liberty. I first experienced T.C. going "solo" on May 1994 in Louisville, Kentucky. Months on down the road, T.C. Raunchers moved west, and I can now see T.C. go psycho spazz almost every night. T.C. is an individual who is very intelligent, and he breathes talent. I don't know, all I have to say is that T.C. Raunchy's like no other; he can eat a potato burrito faster than you. T.C. doesn't like gritters.—**Mario Rubalcaba**

Tony Cox is an original, if you ever get to meet him, you'll see; there's definitely only one. T.C. is a psycho spazz. T.C. Raunch Noodles is gonna bust it out. He's my friend—I'm glad of that.—**Thom Hornung**





bear hughes

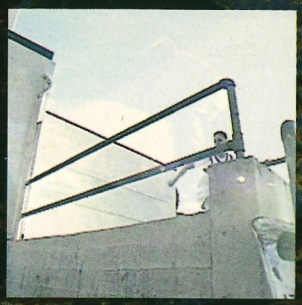
Home: Jacksonville, Florida
Sponsors: Element

What can you say, he's a little guy from Jacksonville, Florida. At one time you could see him as a pad-rat at the Kona Skatepark, shooting the bowls and hitting the vertical. Now we have come to know Bear as one of the members on the Element team. Bear has come a long way since the Kona days—skating with the likes of Buck Smith, Bob Reeves, and the East Coast Bone Brigade: Kevin Lambert and Donny Griffin. At one time you could even catch Caine Gayle, Clyde Singleton, Robert Camp, and Bear hitting the bowls together. Bear has been skating for seven years and has no complaints. You can plan to see more of Bear in the near future; catch him in the Element video, or maybe you'll just run into him sooner or later. He would like to thank his mom and dad, Steve Douglas, Jonny (Jonny Quest), Andy Howell, and David Duren for hiking him across the country several times.—**D. Duren**

ORTIZ

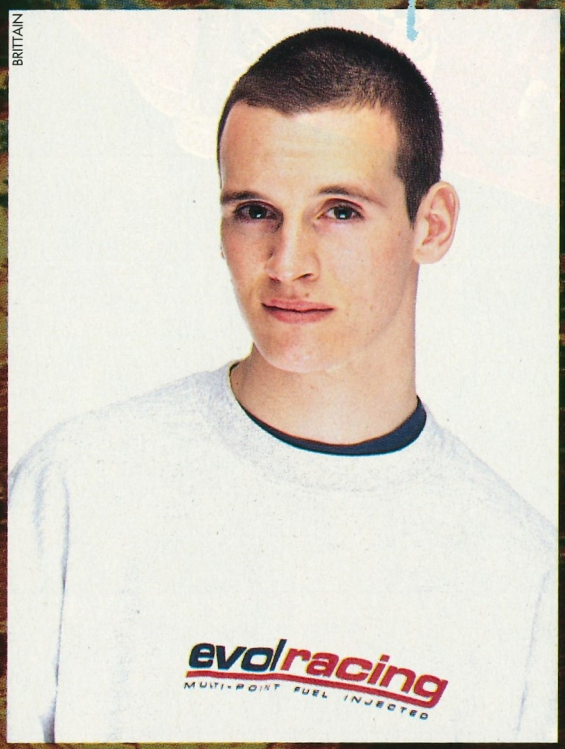
vinnie ponte

Home: East
Age: 19
Sponsor: Vans, Treefort



There is only one word to say about Vinnie's skateboarding skills: "illumatic." He skates clean, smooth, and powerful. You will never find him backing down from anything if it involves going fat. Vinnie's a real cool guy and always has a positive attitude. Vinnie says "hi" to Periety, Alf, Troy Morgan, Fat Beats, Dogg Eat Dogg, Fat Vinnie, ESP Posse, Scott Sorenson, Cookie Head, Big Matt, and Scott, Chappy, and the Supreme Crew.—**Caine Gayle**

adil dyani



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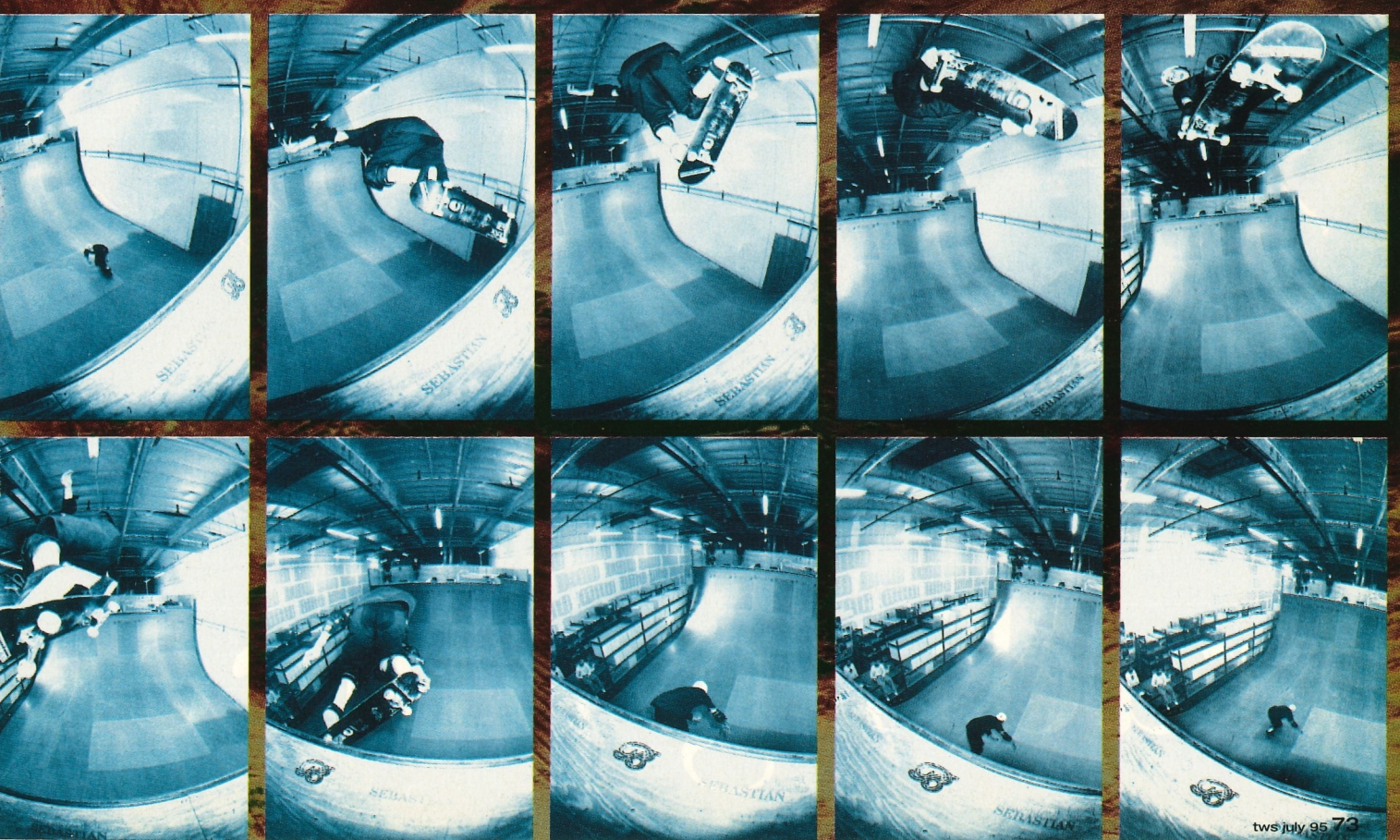
Home: Oslo, Norway and G-spot.
Sponsors: Evol, Airwalk, Race, Venture, XYZ, Droors, G-spot

Adil is a person with amazing energy; just give him chocolate, a bag of sugar, and creamer with an endless pot of your strongest coffee, and he will happily not sleep through his whole visit to the United States. We're not sure, but we think he likes it here. This probably has a lot to do with his friend Stephanie and the great skate spots of San Diego, especially the Plan B ramps, which he visits regulary.—**Ed and Jake**

BRITTAIN

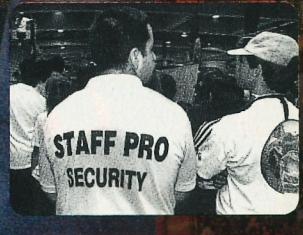
check out



trading places

DAN WOLFE

action sports retailer and climax distribution open their doors once again



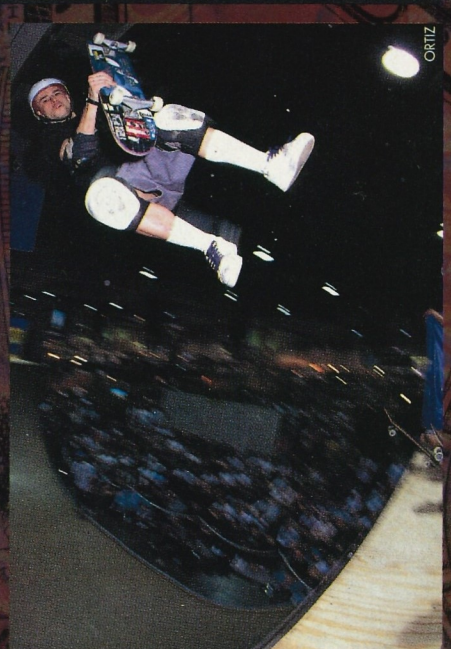
Spread: Copenhagan's own Rune Glifberg, sporting a nice tailgrab to fakie. Sequence: Kris Markovich clears the pyramid to land backside 180 nosegrind. Mugs top to bottom: Thomas Morgan. Steve Berra and Paul Sharpe. TransWorld Publisher Larry Balma, with Editor Dave Swift, and Flip's Ian Deacon and Jeremy Fox. In-house security. Tas and Crum. Deluxe crew.

portraits by grant brittain and skin phillips

Tabias Walker, backside 180 kickflip.

Andy MacDonald, frontside blunt.

Mike Frazier, kickflip Indy to fakie.



A brief conversation on the San Diego ASR show with Joel and *Skin*.

What fundamental aspects are important about the trade show?

It's the only time of year when people really get together; they can talk about business, or not talk about business, they can go drink, and not have to worry about some contest being run or being certain places at certain times. What are your observations of the trade show? How many have you been to?

Too many.

What's the first thing that you notice about the trade show?

The girls. I see a lot of cool people and wannabe cool people. What I like about the trade show is seeing everybody.

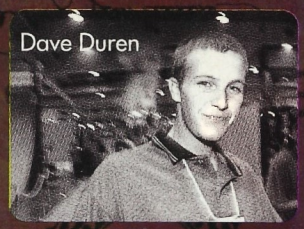
I think skateboarding has gotten to be a bigger thing at the show. It seems to be the center of it.

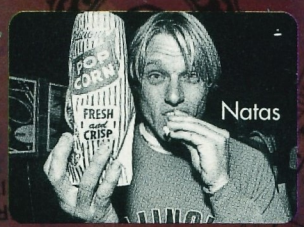
A few years ago it was just this small corner of the floor, all mostly streetwear. Now that section just keeps getting bigger; it's nearly the main part of the show. You still have these massive stalls, your big boys are still there. Every year it's getting bigger, every new show, people say, "It's the best show we ever had." The orders are coming in.

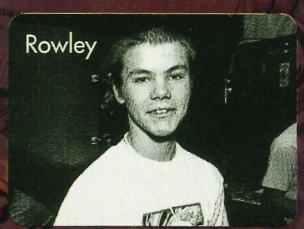
It's totally taking over, whereas surfing once did. Snowboarding seems afraid to do anything really different, plus it's not really their primary show. Skateboarding definitely leads trends. You can go around the surf booths, and the clothing is skateboarding.

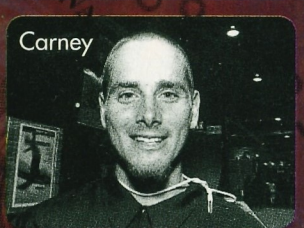
Whatever skateboarding does, people copy it.

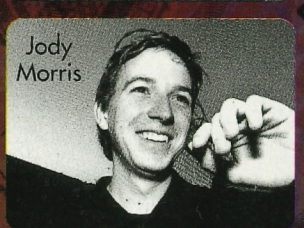
With women's clothes, too. The designs are derivative of what the skateboard industry likes to see on girls.

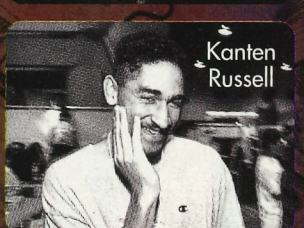


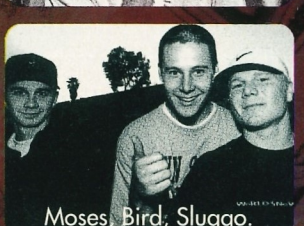


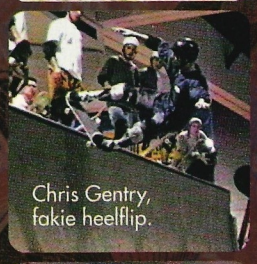




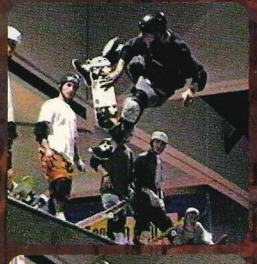








Chris Gentry, fakie heelflip.



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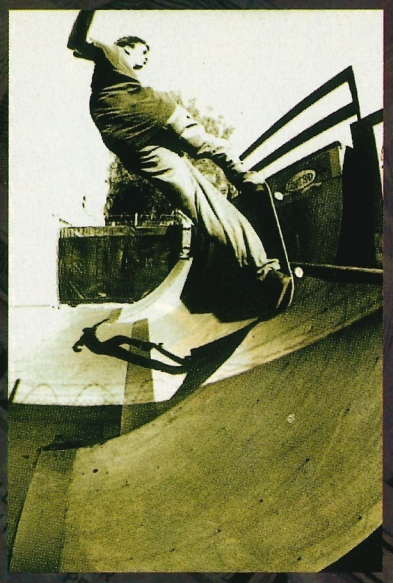
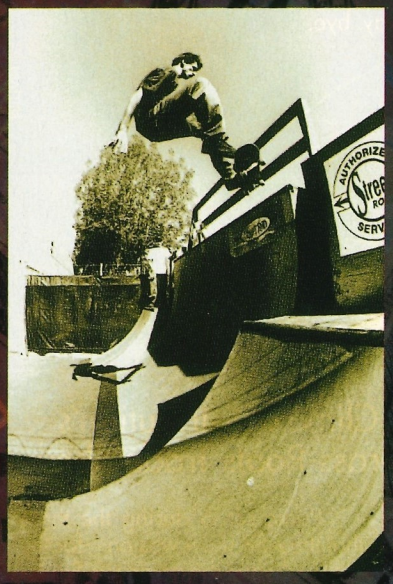
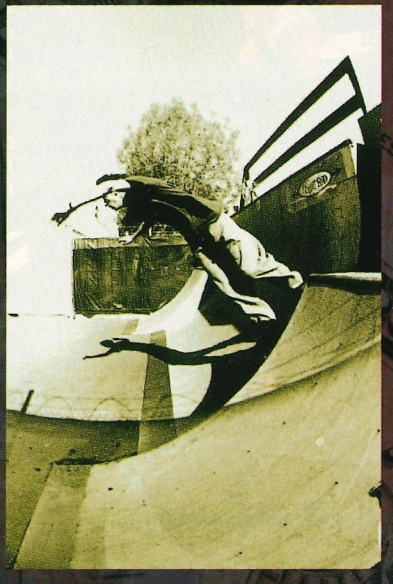
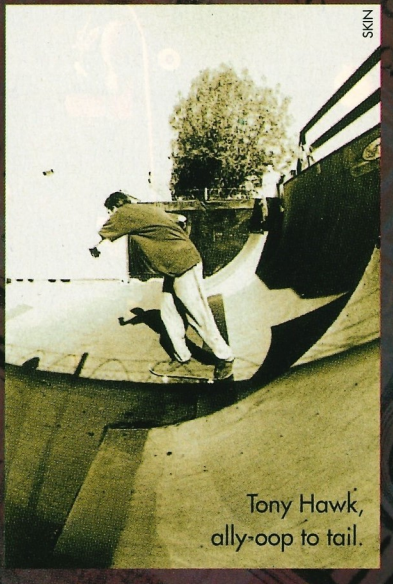








SKIN

Tony Hawk, ally-oop to tail.

Short skirts and little T-shirts.

I was pissed that Colin McKay and Danny Way weren't allowed to skate; they couldn't get on the list. Stuff like that needs to be sorted out. People want to see Colin and Danny skate.

Did you go around the booths?

Yeah, they seemed to be a bit bigger, a lot cleaner, more effort put in. I liked Gabe Morford's slide-shows at the Deluxe booth, that was rad.

Santa Cruz's booth looked really clean.

Yeah, it did. I liked the Foundation booth, the way they were concentrating on something different, the network.

I think the booth thing had totally taken off. This year it was like out-boothing each other. So many booths built. Some of the snowboard companies looked like they spent a lot of money.

There was a stripper at one booth.

Which one?

The one behind the Transworld booth.

That's what I'm talking about, people trying to outdo each other.

I thought that the skating was really

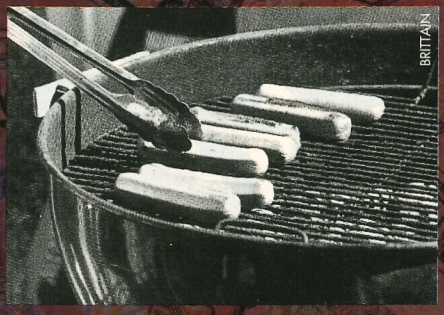
BRITTAIN

good.
What would you say could be changed about the trade show?
I'd like to see more skating, longer sessions, and a wider variety of skaters. Whenever something gets organized, not everyone's happy. I'd like to see everybody happy. The street course upstairs was rad.
The one thing I hate is when I ask people if they're enjoying the show, they say, "The show is boring, the show sucks shit." It doesn't suck shit; it's amazing that all those people get together at all on any basis. It's essential. I bet if you asked a lot of companies, that would be a whole bunch of their business for the year. I like the Action Sports Show, I think they do a good job. It goes to Long Beach in a year, I wonder how that will work out. I like the show.
I like them.
Okay, bye.

BRITTAIN

Climax Distribution's Grass-Roots Trade Show

Panic set in during the three days that the ASR show was on—for the first time in a while the notorious Southern California weather turned on us, the rain poured. It wasn't looking at all good for the Tracker-day festivities, but on Wednesday it was all change—the bluest sky in a long time blessed, those turkey dogs started hitting the barbie, drink filled the coolers, and everything was set for the day.


BRITTAIN

There was no lack of skating throughout most of the day. Many of the pros who were to be seen wandering the floors of the ASR show managed to make it and skate. In attendance were Kelly Bird, Tony Hawk, Tom Penny, Rob Dyrdek, Geoff Rowley, Laban Pheidias, John Drake, Kris Markovich, Steve Olson, Jordan Richter, Alfonso Rawls, Tony Cox, Jamie Thomas, and a million others. At

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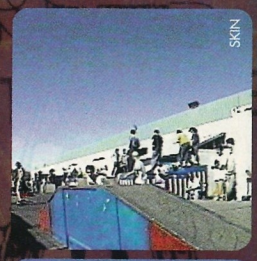
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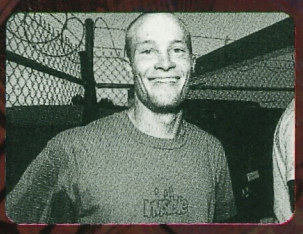
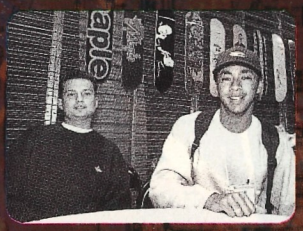




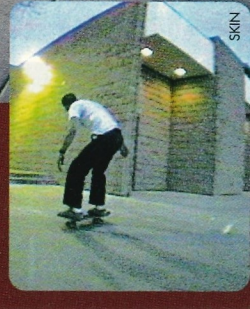
times it made pro practice look like a dream, with bodies flying in all directions, but the skaters pulled through and made the best of what they had, just like they always tend to do.

—Skin

Captions top to bottom from opposite page top left: Catch 'em high. Kelly Bird, frontside kickflip. Brian Patch ... riding for FOCUS! Tracker skatepark's security system. Food for thought. Sequence: Geoff Rowley, noseblunt slide. This page top left: Chris Lambert, Bucky Lasek, and Laban Phiedias. Tiffany and socks. Matt Mumford. Danny Minnick. Steve Benson and June Cate at the Maple booth. Kris Markovich, Jason Ellis, Johnny Schillereff, and Mark Oblow. Chumper, Andy MacDonald, Alfonso Rawls, and Petey Martinez. "I used to be this big!" Rick Kosick. Kento alley-oop frontside air. Panama Dan sleeps with one eye open (pop shove-it).

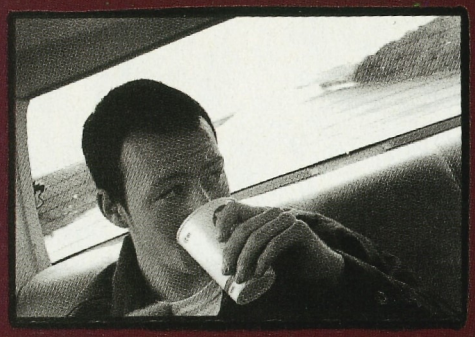
marc johnson

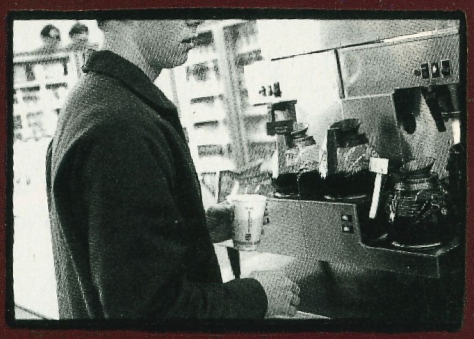
Marc Johnson, three-thousand miles from home (Winston Salem, North Carolina) and pushing the mediocrity with a backside tailslide down seven-stair rail at Genghis Kahn school.

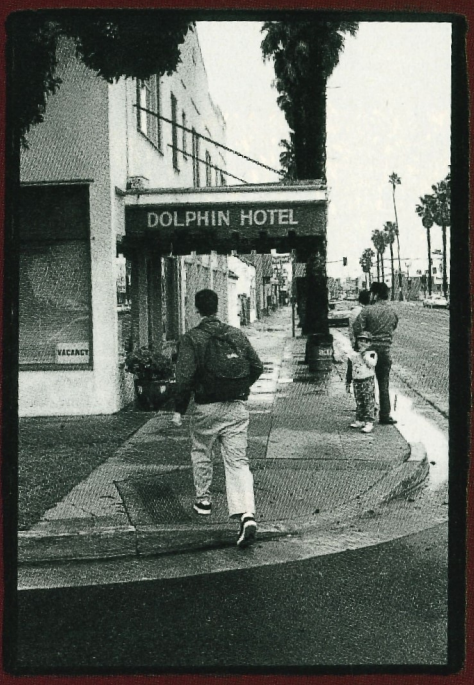


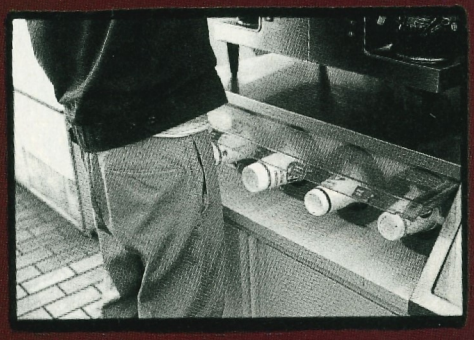
SKIN

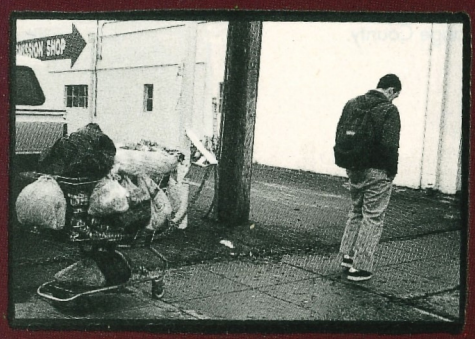
living the california dream

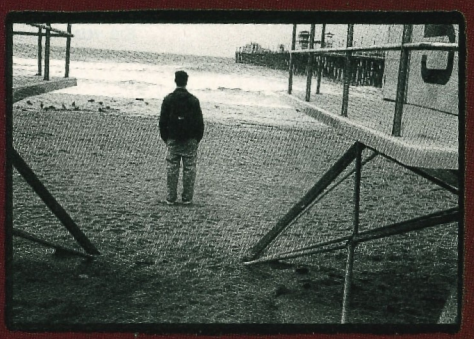












PORTRAITS BY HEATHER ROSE HOWARD

Just got home. It's late—2:39 a.m. I'm not really tired tonight; it was a pretty good day. Opened some more caffeine to keep me up for a while, while I think. Put on some Doors for a little mood music. I can hear the sound of rain. It sounds good. The soft drone of rain is nice after a day of car horns, shouting people, machines, computers and life. My face feels rough and I guess it's time for a shave again. It can wait until tomorrow. I'm seventeen now, but oddly enough I don't feel seventeen. I feel twenty something, I don't know. People are shocked when I tell them, "No, I can't buy you beer because I'm only seventeen." "You're only seventeen?" If I had a dollar every time I heard that … It's been a year now since I left home in search of the California Dream: this entity that people dream of far away. People inside their own private hell, whatever it may be. Mine was a cold, backwoods hole in the earth.

Three-thousand miles away from the dream I had heard and read so much of. All you had to do was get there and they'd do the rest. So I left. Just got up and left. I had 80 bucks in my pocket, my clothes, and a skateboard. I was scared, scared of leaving home, of not making it, scared because for once I wasn't in control of what was going to happen. (I don't guess I ever was.) At the ripe old age of sixteen I left home to live on my own in pursuit of something better. Better indeed. I didn't have anyone around to tell me to do my homework, be in by midnight, clean my room. No one to take care of me, bail me out, to tell me everything will be all right, or tell me that they loved me and appreciated the things I did every day. You never really know what you've got until it's gone. I had to find out the hard way, the only way.

Things were sketchy at the start; I'm a skeptic in the first place, so it only made things worse. Many nights I wondered what the hell I had done to myself. Money was tight. Jobs were scarce, and the ones I had were dead-end nowhere jobs catering to every whim and complaint of the general public. But I had to until something better came along. So I was living the California Dream. Hell, yes. Working to barely cover the bills and have fifteen dollars left over for food and luxuries that month. That's pretty funny nowadays. But at the time I was happy with that, I think. I think that's what pushed me harder to go somewhere with myself and the things I was doing.

I pushed myself harder and harder, and pushed the mediocrity and got through, and my work paid off, and someone out there appreciated me and what I could do if given the chance. I took it all the way. I'm still taking it every day when I open my eyes in the morning. So I'm living the California Dream. Sunshine, blue skies, perfect spots, pollution, crime; "It's all good," a friend once told me. So every day I go out and live the California Dream, but I miss the old times. If I could, I would do it all over again, exactly the same. That's how I am what I am. I wouldn't change a thing. The old times—you miss them so much, but would never go back.

—Marc Johnson

Mike hovers above some shrubbery while clearing a gap somewhere in the vastness of Orange County.

SKIN

mike manzoori

It was by the skin of his teeth that Mike Manzoori made it through American airport immigration. Luckily for him things worked out okay, an honest face can take you a long way. When all else fails, maybe coming up straight is good—even if it is the only option. He put his whole future on the line, immigration bit the hook, and it's thanks to them that this little chat is taking place.

So Mike, what have you been up to over the last few weeks?

Well, I spent Christmas at home in London with my family.

Why did you go home?

I went home because my visa waiver ran out in America—my 90 days were up, I had to go home. Also I wanted to get my stuff together for moving out here, see my family for Christmas, and see all my friends for one last time. So I spent a month at home for Christmas and came out here on the tenth of January, and since then I've been working at ATM pretty much every day. We've been running around like headless chickens getting stuff ready for the trade show.

Was it weird giving everything up at home, leaving it all behind and saying good-bye?

Well, for the last couple of months I've known I wouldn't be staying in England for much longer. So the last month was rad because I got to see all the friends that I wanted to see. We had a big party in my house at New Year: kind of a New Year going-away party. It was all so much fun, and I didn't really think about it until I was on the plane coming over here. Then it really sunk in, and I was kind of bummed. I didn't realize the magnitude of the step I was taking until then, but it was something I knew I had to do.

Why did you make the decision to come and live over here?

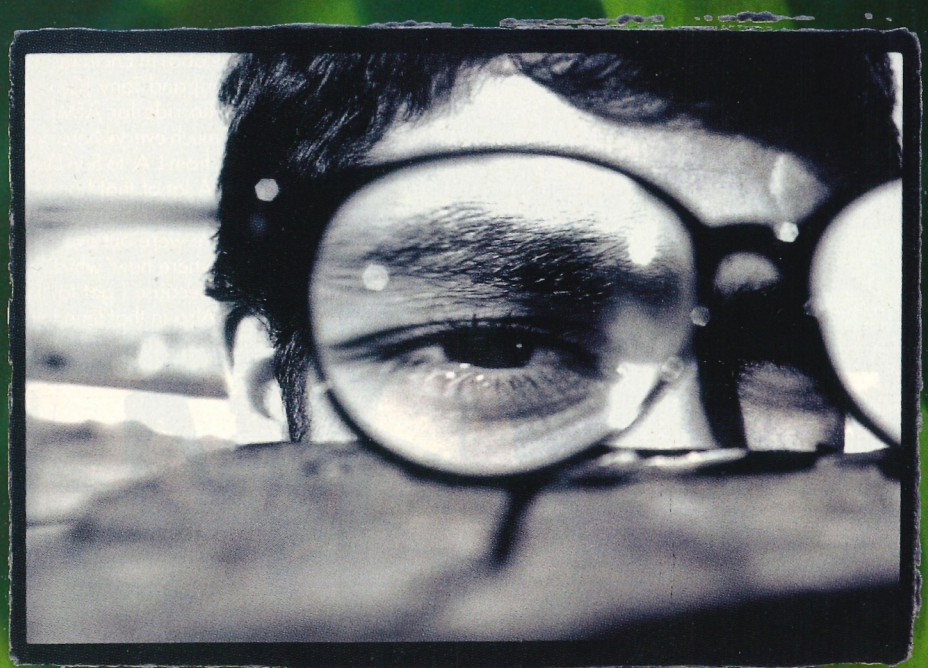
Right now everything is perfect for me to be here. I'm a pro skateboarder for ATM, and they're over here, so even if I wasn't working at the company, I was going to move here anyway. But then they wanted me to come over and work doing the graphics and ads. The combination of the two was an opportunity I couldn't miss.

Do you think there's a big difference between the British and American skateboarding scene?

Yes and no. Skateboarding's not really accepted here, but in general it's not such a surprise to see a skateboarder walking down the street, whereas back in England it's not quite as hyped up. As far as the skaters go, when I first came out here a couple of summers ago, there was a big gap in their standards of skating, but that's closed now, first with people like Curtis [McAnn] , then Carl [Shipman], Jeff [Rowley], and Tom [Penny].

When Mike was back home in London during the holidays, he pretty much had to skate the indoor facilities like St. Albans because of the horrible weather. Nosebone Indy to fakie at the aforementioned skatepark.

WIG



SKIN

Do you think it's also because of vert? All the vert guys used to be out here, and it was hard getting to see any of the new stuff in the UK until months after it came out. Now you can see all the new stuff in weeks.

Yeah, there was always a delay between what happened over here and what happened in England. So everything used to be more of an imitation of America, whereas now it's the same, everyone gets into the same kind of thing. Before pro skaters in England didn't compare at all to pro skaters in America.

In the past you had to come over here to prove yourself, to a certain extent this is still true because you won't get discovered in the UK.

For me it's a lot easier here because the whole industry is here. In England just keeping a constant supply of products is hard. A few years back when Bod and Douglas came out here, they had absolutely no choice. If they stayed in England then there would had no future in sponsorship or anything.

Now you can be a pro in England.

Yeah, now you can get hooked up to a certain extent, but if you really want to keep up with everything, you've got to be over here.

You had hassles coming into the country—

Strobe frontside kickflip at St. Albans.

manzoori

what happened?

Everyone had told me how strict it was getting into America, I didn't really take it that seriously. I was pretty stupid because I came back with all my clothes and half my record collection. I expected to be questioned because I've been back and forth a lot lately, so I had a story planned about how I was just coming here for a month on holiday. As they were rummaging through my bags they found a card and a book from my friends with messages like "Good luck in America," "Don't forget us in England"—stupid stuff like that. But wasn't really my fault, because the stuff was given to me to open on the plane. Well anyway, they sussed me out, and I came clean and explained that I was over here to get my work permit and start a job, etc. By some stroke of luck, and considering I was so honest, they let me in. However, I did have to swear in front of a video camera to tell "The whole truth and nothing but ... " At that point I didn't care where I was. I just wanted to go home and cry, but I made it in, and right now it's costing me and ATM a fortune to pay a lawyer so that I can stay here. But you do what you've got to do.

So do you think you want to stay forever?

I don't know. I just take each day as it comes. I don't see myself living in California forever, like I said, it's just ideal for me right now. I've got no plans to go back anytime, I'll just take it as it comes. I'm sure I'll stick around in skateboarding for a while and then ... I can't say. I don't plan that far ahead. I'll just see what happens.

Where have you been skating in America so far?

Well, since I got here recently I haven't been skating that much because I've been working every day and the weather has been bad with all that rain. But when I came over here from September through to November, I stayed with Mario [Rubalcaba] in Encinitas, and Chip [Vanham] and Tony [Cox, the other guys who ride for ATM]. We skated pretty much everywhere down south, I guess, from L.A. to San Diego, all the spots. A lot of that has to do with the time we were filming for the ATM video. We were out every day skating somewhere new, which was good for me because I got to skate everywhere. Also in that time I went

to San Francisco and spent a month up there to stay with my friends Chris Senn and Aimee. I stayed in Santa Rosa with Brian Gaberman for a couple of weeks in the middle of that.

Which scene do you like the best? Do you see a difference between the northern and southern scenes?

I didn't notice the difference when I went up there because I thought, "Hey this is great," but when I came back down, I hate to say it, but everyone here is way slacker, up there everyone is more 24/seven skateboarding. My favorite place that I first wanted to live was Santa Rosa. I made a lot of friends there: Brian, Hanzy, John Miner, Nanda, all those guys. It was totally a rad little scene—it wasn't anything hyped up. There was plenty of stuff to skate, and it's only an hour from S.F, which is a huge skatepark in itself—it seemed perfect for me. I was stoked on how motivated everyone was around there. I came back here and people were lounging. It was all, "We'll wait for someone to call." You'd be lucky if you got out of the house by five, even then it may take you an hour to get to a spot. "It's too dark, it's too late, I'm too tired." You may just get to skate for twenty minutes. Then it's, "Let's go get some beers and hang out and party." That's your day, really. Up there it wasn't hectic, it was just a more comfortable pace: skate in the afternoon and the evening; it was just perfect. Now that I have responsibilities at ATM, which I'm really stoked about, it's kind of a compromise.

Do you want to thank some people?

I want to thank the Falahees for helping me out so much and letting me stay. Thanks to all my friends back in England for skating with me—Mark Channer, Andy—they know who they are. Thanks to anyone who ever let me stay at their house; I've spent the last six months on floors and sofas. Thanks to Ray at Gullwing and Don and Pierre at Etnies. Thanks to all my friends and family for supporting me, the Queen, the Pope, and anyone else.

It wasn't long after Mike had his problems with airport immigration that this photo was taken of him frontside nosesliding a wooden handrail in San Clemente—his new home.

"I just take each day as it comes."

drake Jones

Backside 180 kickflip over an alley, S.F.

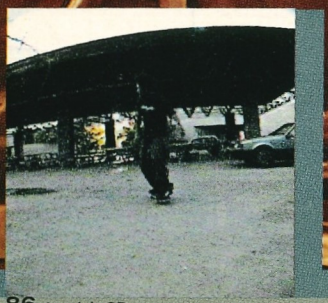
MIKE BLABAC

In an interview a long time ago Steve Caballero said that instead of trying to learn every new trick, he preferred to learn a trick, and then go as far as he could with it. Once he felt he'd done enough with that particular trick, he would go on to learn another trick and repeat the process. Printed close to five years ago, that style of skating really describes how skaters now view their art. No longer content to flop out the newest trick, many skaters are taking the tricks that they do farther, higher, and faster. It's all about skateboarding and pushing limits without losing heart. It's good.

There're lots of people we owe a hearty "thank you" to for helping skateboarding go in this direction. A few obvious ones are Jeremy Wray, Keith Hufnagel, Salman Agah, Neal Hendrix, Kareem Campbell, Kris Markovich, and Carl Shipman. Drake Jones is one of these skaters as well.

Drake skates so smooth it's ridiculous. Everything he does, no matter how big, is an exercise in effortless perfection. He's one of the lucky ones blessed with the type of style that makes you want to thank him personally after he skates (who knew that a pop shove-it on the flat could be so beautiful?). Drake will be the first person to pull you into a game of horse, and because he always has that goofy smile on his face, he's the last person you can say no to—even though you know he's going to take you out quick (you knew better than to keep up with the Joneses, right?). If it's a Monday night between eight and nine, there's a damn good chance Drake Jones is in front of his television set somewhere watching *Melrose Place*. It may not be the typical way a pro skater (if there is one) spends his evenings, but Drake Jones is far from typical. The photos that accompany these words will help you understand some of his skating ability. The rest comes from his heart.

—Jim Thiebaud

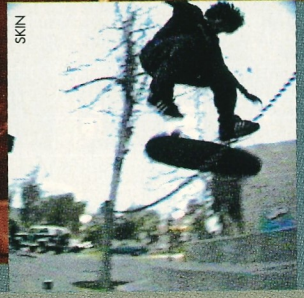


SKIN

BACKGROUND BY NATHAN PETERS

GOOD STUFF

Even with a broken board, Drake went on until he landed this fakie 360 flip clean.



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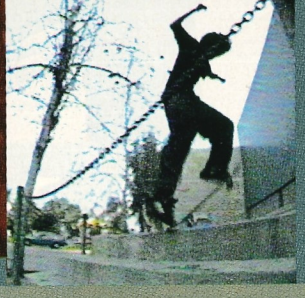


HANDRAILS

Gladiators

How handrailings became a symbol of the American dream.

An extremely brief essay by Joel Patterson

Handrails are American. Like hot dogs, apple pie, and thermo-nuclear landmines, they too stand as a pillar of a great society. Sturdily rising from flights of stairs, they seem to say, "Hey, are you going up/down there? Listen, we know that to reach your goal you've got a long hard climb; trust us, we've been there. It can be a treacherous journey, and it's all uphill, so here's a helping hand. Good luck up/down there."

Their job, therefore, is much like America's: to help those in need—regardless of race, creed, or sexual orientation—to obtain their goals, not by handing it to them on a silver platter like an elevator might, but by offering some basic, yet essential, assistance along the way. In fact, it was once proposed that on the original American flag, they use little handrailings instead of stars, but with sewing technology as it was in the late eighteenth century, stars seemed more feasible.

SWIFT

Seeing Steve Olson annihilate a handrail in Oceanside made Willy Santos a believer. Here we have Willy nosegrinding one of the rails at Albert Einstein Junior High.

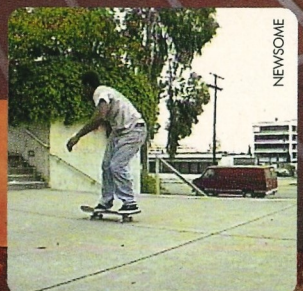
CALL IT A COMEBACK

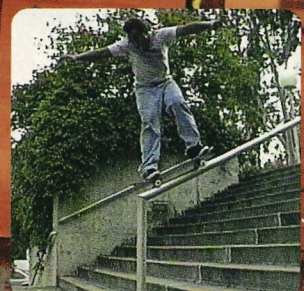
EVEN THOUGH THEY'VE BEEN HERE FOR YEARS

John Reeves getting on top of a frontside180 to backward nosegrind down the famous Green Rail.

SWIFT

Here's a sequence of John Reeves doing a clean 50-50 down twelve stairs.





JUST AS AMERICA SYMBOLIZES SOMETHING DIFFERENT TO EVERY PERSON WHO COMES IN CONTACT WITH IT, HANDRAILS DO ALSO, BUT A HANDRAIL'S REALITY ISN'T QUITE SO PLEASANT. TO CERTAIN YOUNG OWNERS OF SKATEBOARDS, HANDRAILS ARE A CHALLENGE. FOR THOSE SPORTS BORN TO LIVE AND GROW IN THE COLD SHADOWS OF SKYSCRAPERS, WHERE MARBLE, GRANITE, AND REINFORCED CONCRETE TAKE THE PLACE OF SOFT GRASS OR FALLEN AUTUMN LEAVES, HANDRAILS ARE THE ULTIMATE PROVING GROUNDS.

SWIFT

Heath Kirchart following no one with a kickflip to 50-50 down a really famous handrail in Orange County.

Lenny Kirk isn't afraid to switch backside five-0 a handrail.

AESTHETICALLY SPEAKING, THERE'S NOTHING PLEASANT ABOUT HANDRAILS. THEY ARE UGLY BRUTES, AND THEY TYPICALLY LACK MAINTENANCE, WHICH CAUSES A BENT, BATTERED, AND SCRAPED APPEARANCE. THEY STAND IN DEFIANCE OF ALL COMERS, AND LIKE GLADIATORS IN A GREAT ROMAN ARENA, THEY ROAR, AND DRAW BLOOD FROM THEIR OPPONENTS WITHOUT AN OUNCE OF DISMAY. THEY HAVEN'T BEEN KNOWN TO CAUSE A GREAT ARTIST TO CREATE, OR URGE A BRILLIANT SCIENTIST TOWARD A REVOLUTIONARY THEORUM, BUT THEY DO INSPIRE ONE EMOTION IN THE HEARTS OF THOSE SKATEBOARDERS WITH ECONOMY-SIZE ADRENAL GLANDS—FEAR.

SWFT

An ankle brace is all the protection Liverpool, England's Geoff Rowley needs as he noseblunt slides the ten-stair rail at Genghis Kahn High.

Curved rails are not a very common site so it is a rare treat to see someone like Jeremy Wray do a lipslide on one.

SWIFT

This is one of the sickest things I've ever witnessed someone do on a handrail. Transplanted Las Vegas lunatic Chad Muska takes a frontside tailslide to fakie down a twelve-stair monster in about seven tries.

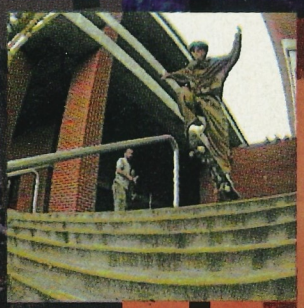
THOMAS

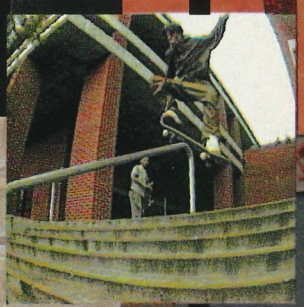
FEAR IS MANY THINGS. ANXIETY, AWE, DISTRESS ... RESPECT. ALL OF WHICH ARE PREREQUISITES FOR THE SKATING OF HANDRAILS; WITHOUT THEM THE PROPER MIND-STATE CANNOT BE ATTAINED. TO TRULY HAVE AN ENJOYABLE HANDRAIL EXPERIENCE YOU MUST RESPECT ITS ABILITY TO SERIOUSLY INJURE YOUR BODY AND SCAR YOUR MIND; YOU MUST KNOW YOUR ABILITIES AND BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF IN REGARDS TO THEM; AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, YOU MUST BE ABLE TO BLEND THAT REPECT WITH SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND FACE YOUR FEAR, BECAUSE THE ONLY SHAME TO BE FOUND IN FEAR IS IF YOU NEVER CHALLENGE YOUR OWN.

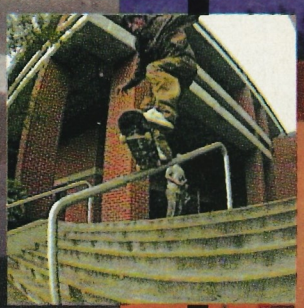
Mario Rubalcaba nollie frontside tailsliding a seven-stair round rail.

SWIFT

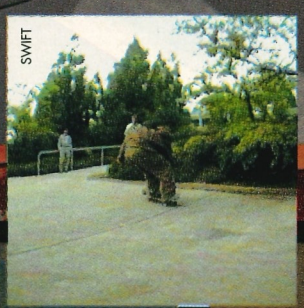
We are quickly discovering that Tom Penny is a damn good skateboarder. On this page you get to view him switch frontside railsliding the seven-stair at Genghis Kahn high. The video is of Tom doing a switch 180 to 5-0 down a another seven-stair treat.

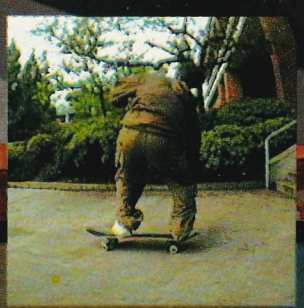


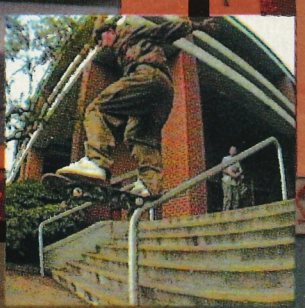




SWIFT







SO, GOD BLESS HANDRAILS, ELVIS, POORLY MADE CARS, AND AMERICA. AS A FINAL NOTE, ALWAYS TRY AND REMEMBER THIS LITTLE PROVERB: APPLY PRESSURE TO HEAVY BLEEDING. GOOD LUCK •

SWIFT

After spending about an hour trying to find a store in downtown San Diego that sold crescent wrenches and vice grips so we could take the fat bolt off this handrail, Josh Kalis finally got to do a backside tailslide—Perseverence pays off.

Jamie Thomas has been on a serious handrail kick lately. Jamie found this crazy set up and just had to do it. Ollie three stairs and land 50-50 style down a steep rail. All the proof you need is on this page.

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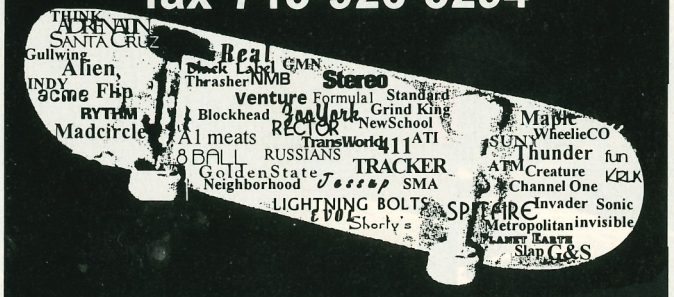

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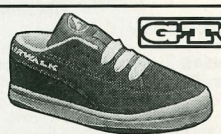

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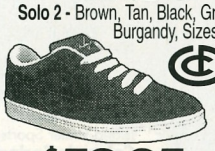

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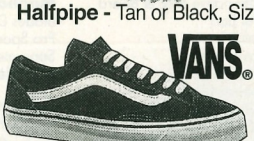

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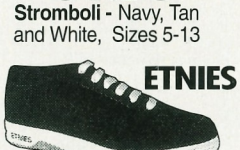

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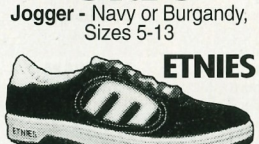

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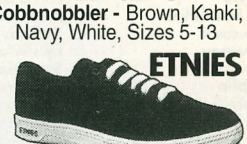

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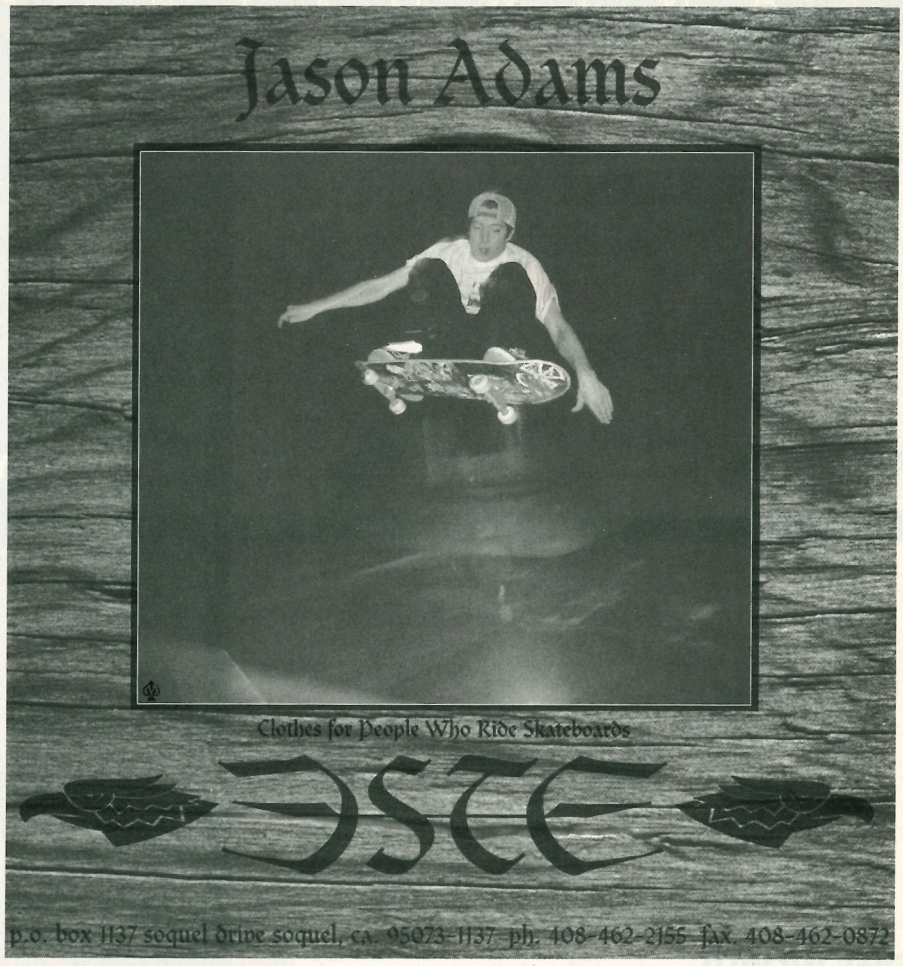

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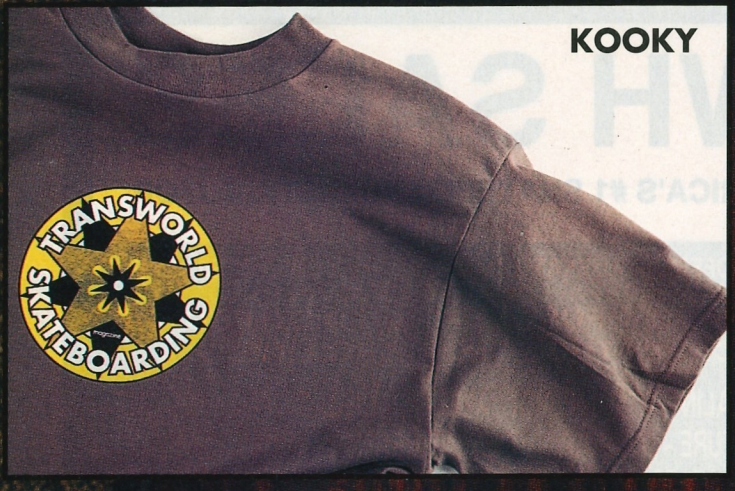

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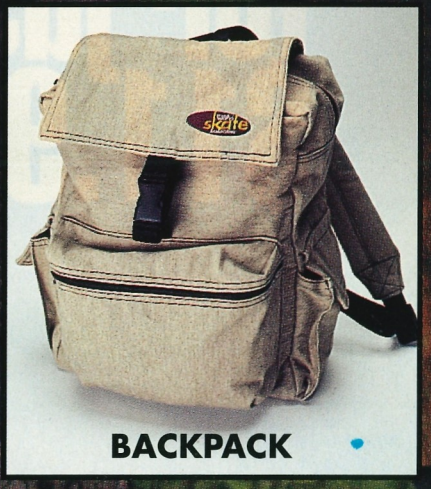

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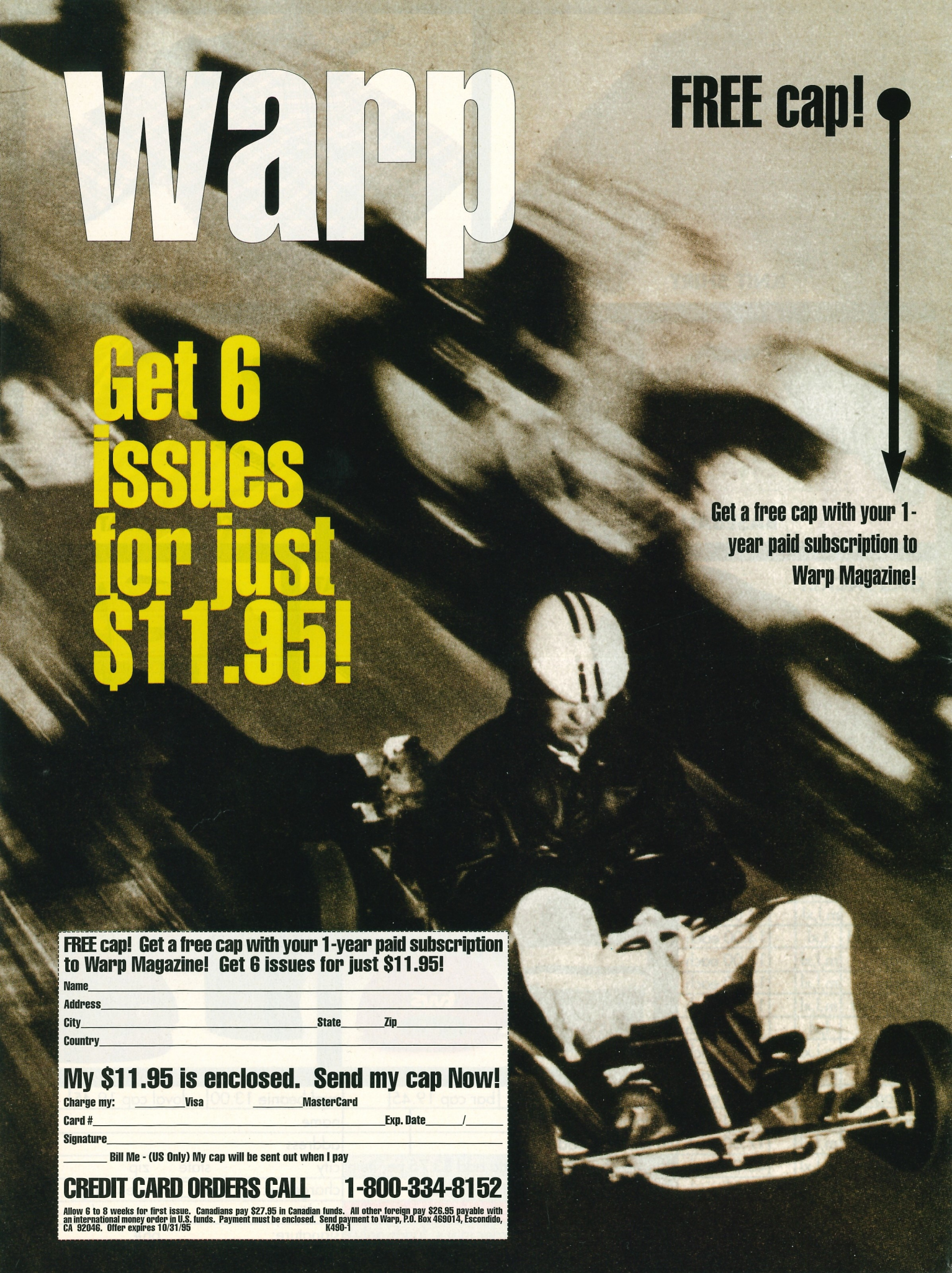

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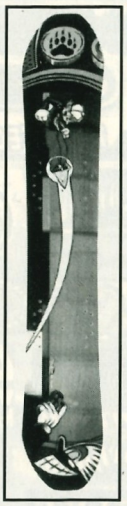

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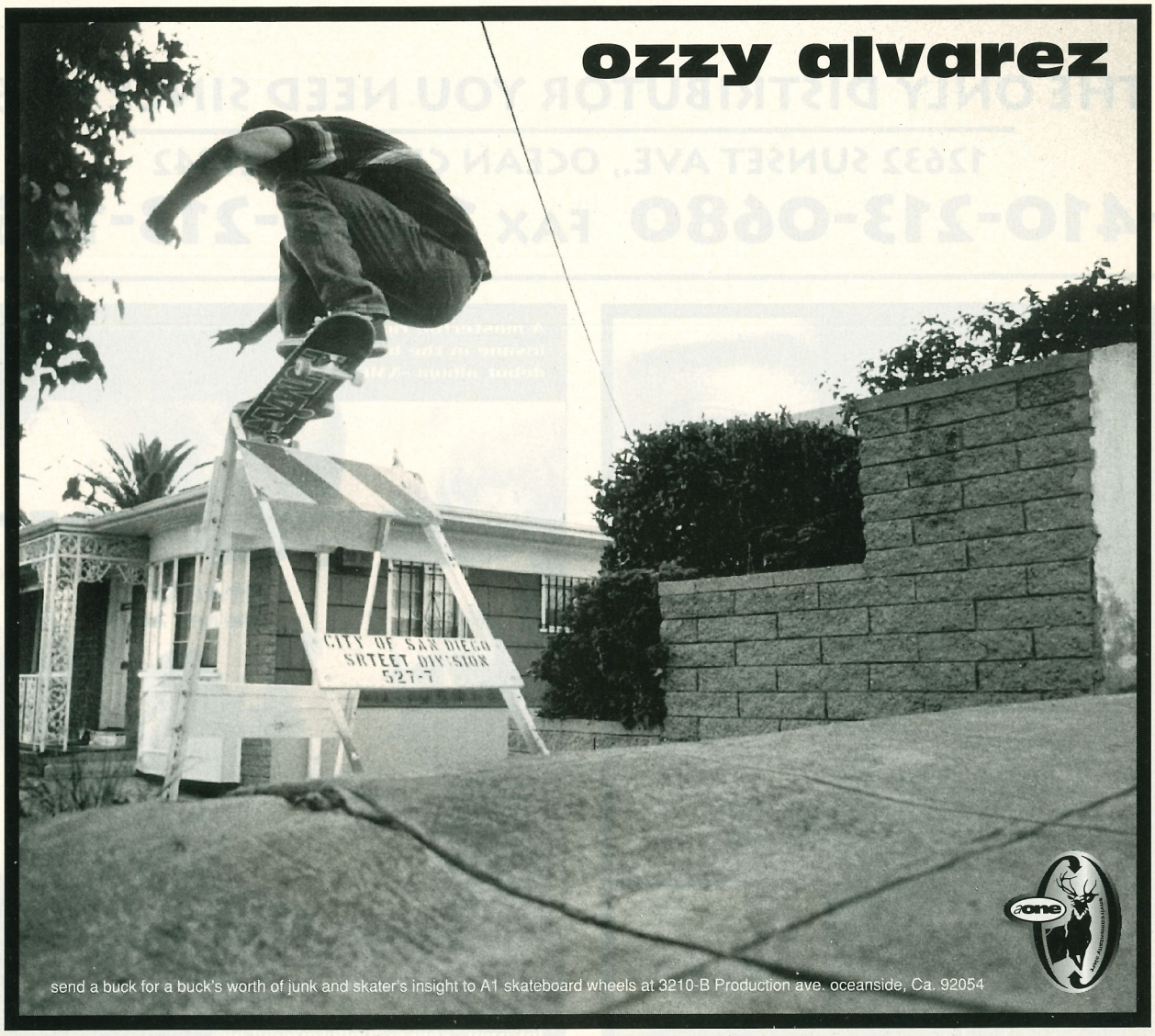
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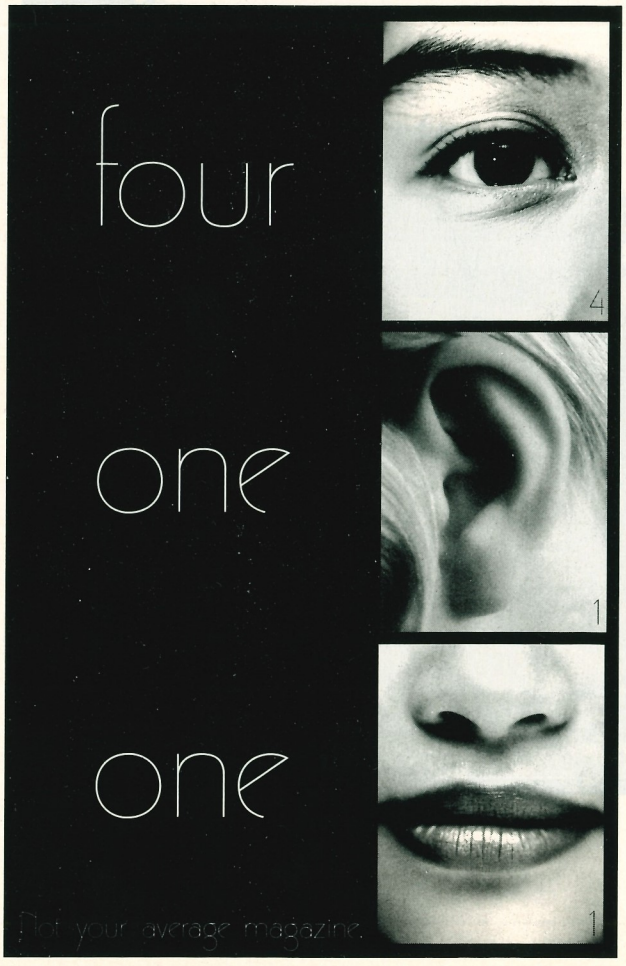

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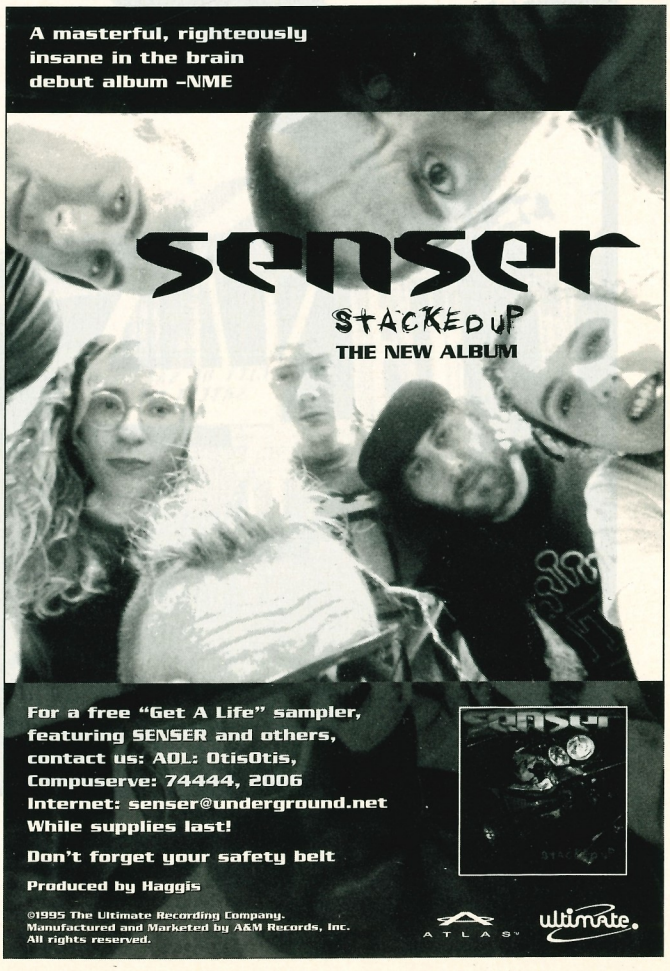

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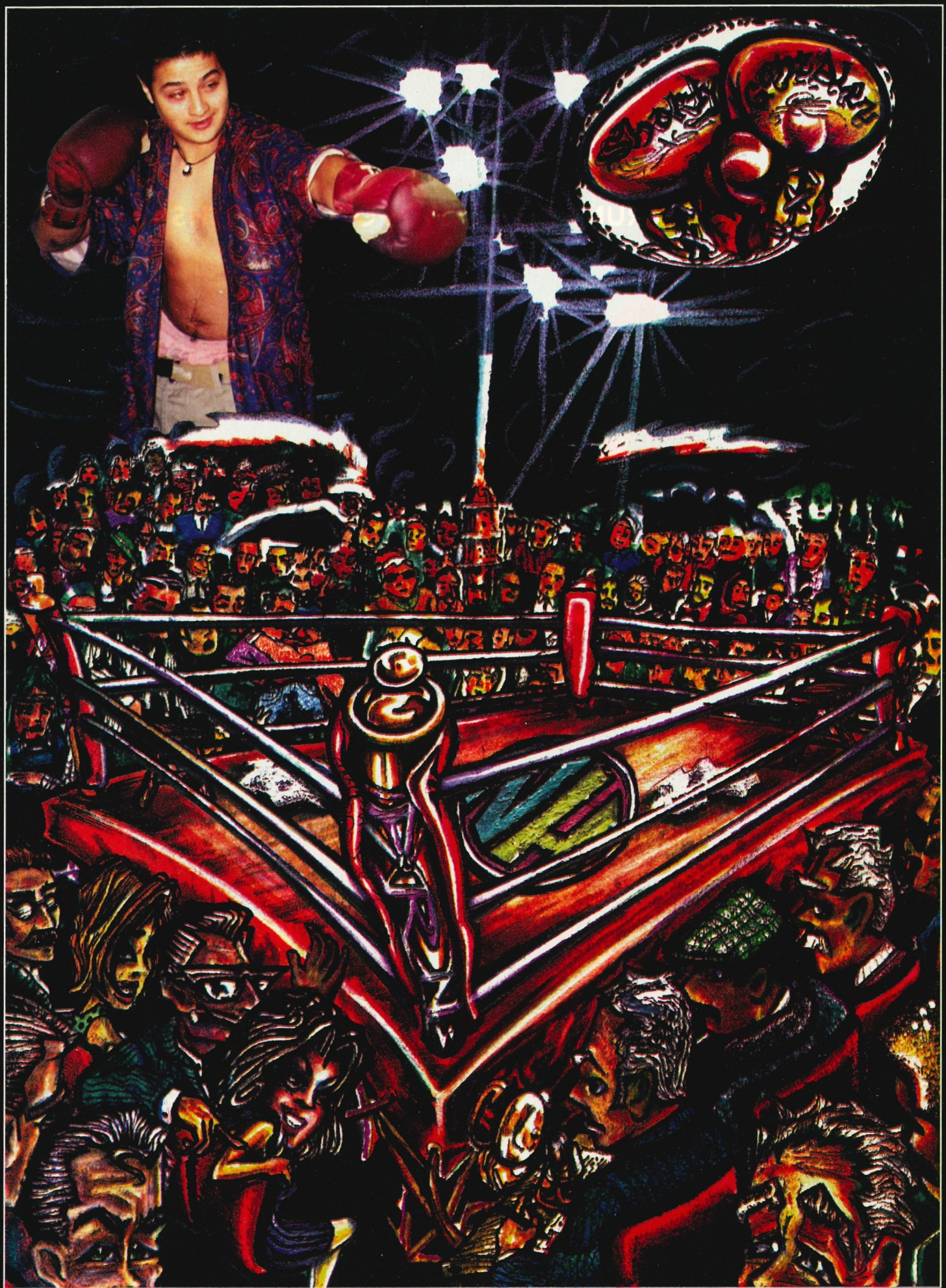

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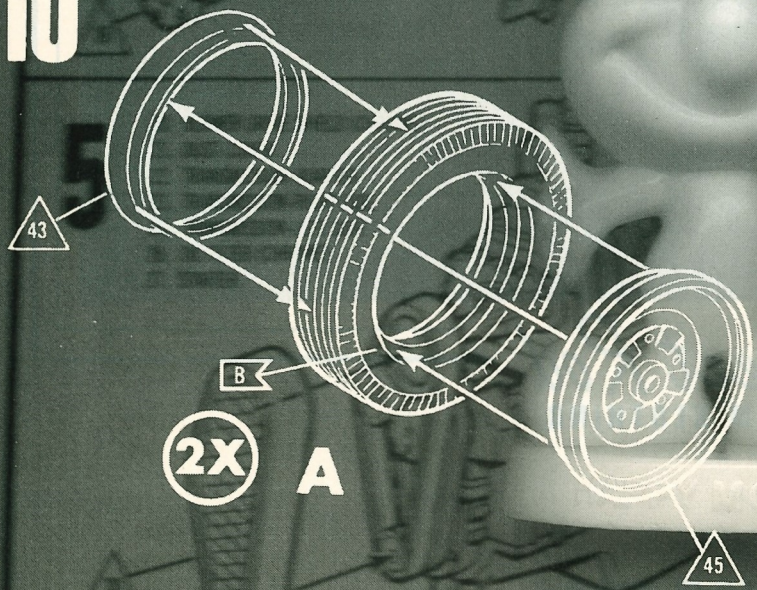

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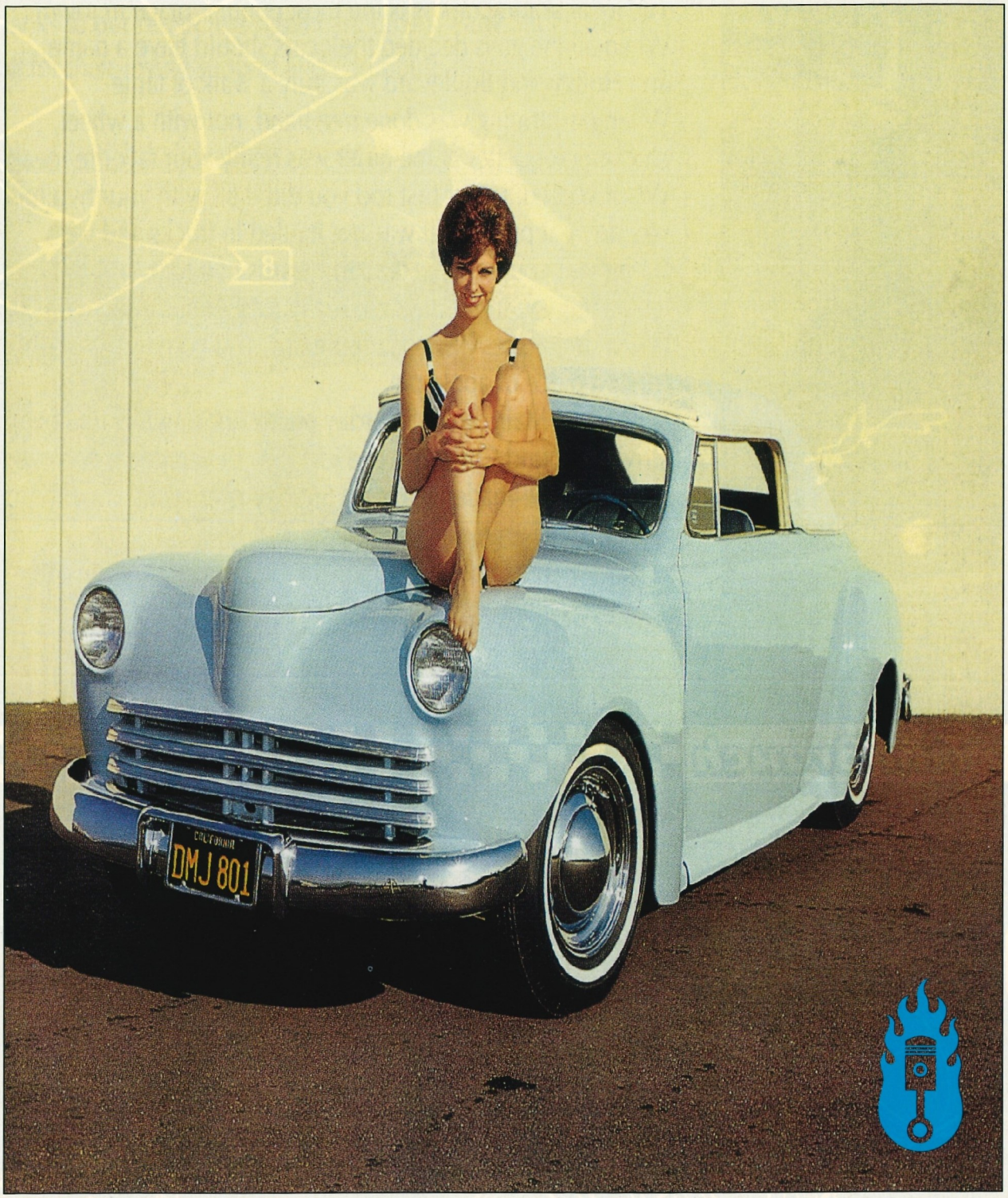

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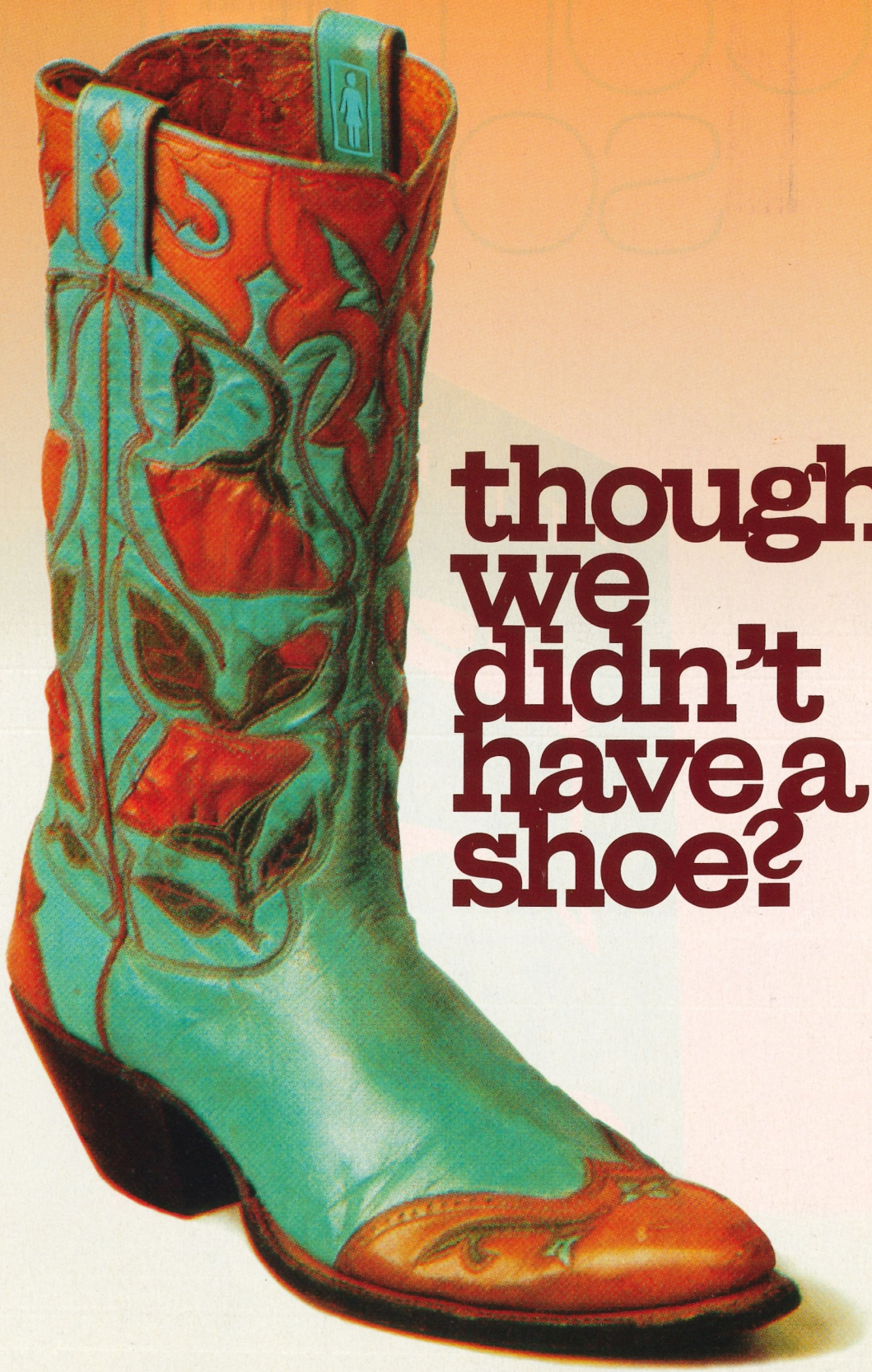

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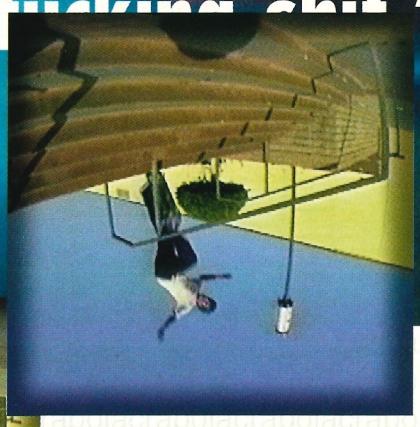

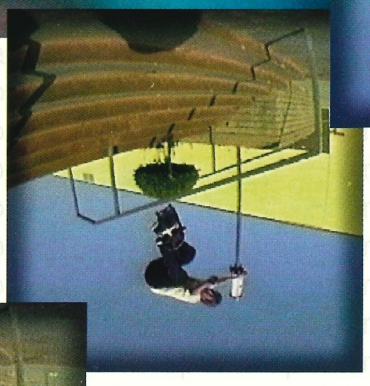

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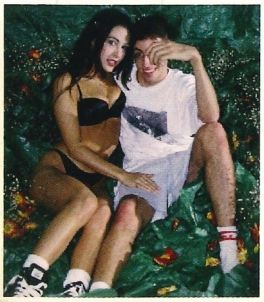

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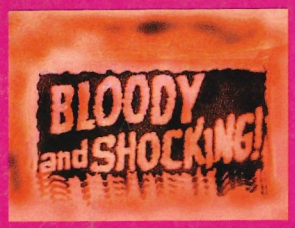

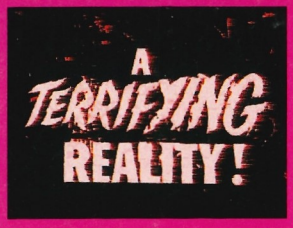

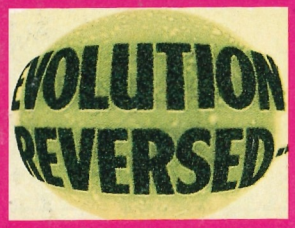

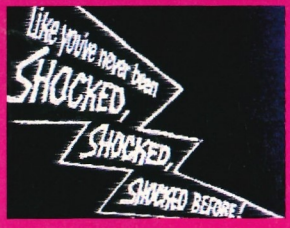

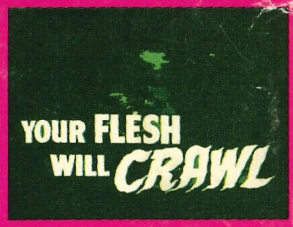

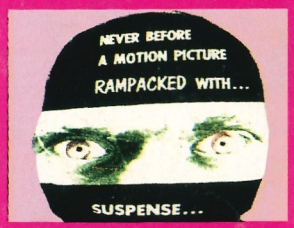

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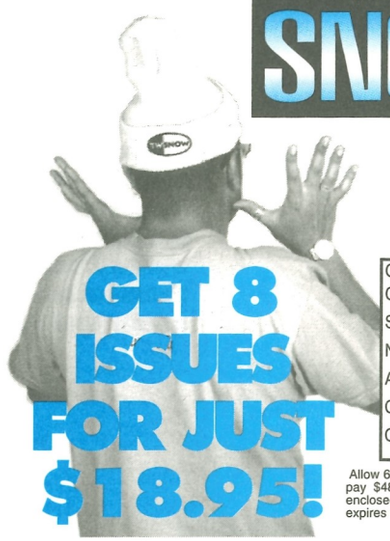

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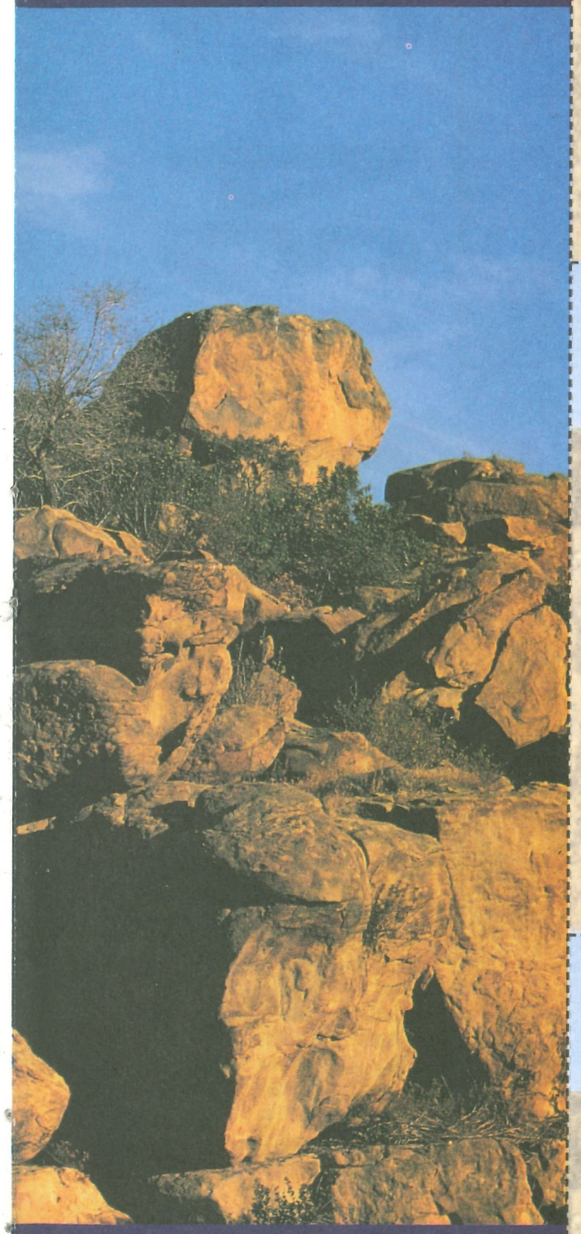

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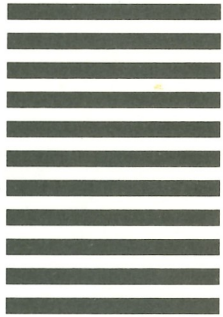

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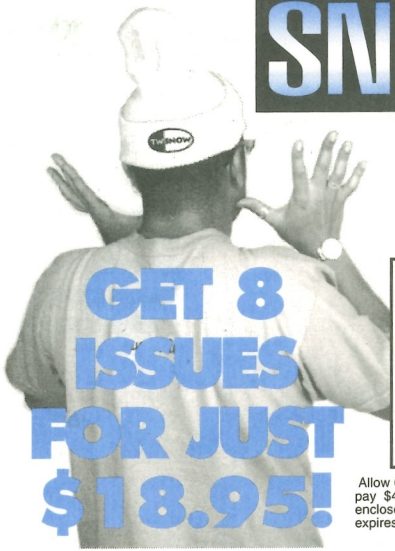

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